THE

POEMS OF OSSIAN,

TRANSLATED BY

JAMES MACPHERSON, Esq.

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AUTHENTICATED, ILLUSTRATED, & EXPLAINED,

BY

HUGH CAMPBELL, Esq., F.A.S. Ed.

In Two Volumes.

VOL. I.



O sacer et mag us labor, omnia fato
Eripis, et populis donas mortalibus ævum
—— — Pharsalia stra
Vivet et a nullo tene nur ævo!—Lucan.

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TO THE MOST NOBLE

FRANCIS,

Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Moira, and Viscount Loudon, Governor General of India, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD MARQUIS,

THAT the gratitude of so obscure an individual as I am, should fly over seas to you, in a remote quarter of the Globe, cannot be matter of surprize, when that of hundreds, whether of the literary men whom you have fostered and cherished, or of the army of emigrants whom you so generously fed and sheltered, traverse the same regions, and confess themselves not more grateful for the benevolence of a truly noble mind, than for the endearing manner in which its excellent qualities were exercised.

As patrons now-a-days are become unfashionable, and are merely nominal, not virtual beings, so, in fairness, I cannot be charged with ought but vanity,—after five years researches—in attempting to give your name to posterity with that of the first of British poets; for in so doing, perhaps, I may preserve my own. And though my r[illegible]ans prevent me following you in your pr[illegible] noblest maxim of true philosophy; ne[illegible]g the [illegible]test possible good with the [illegible]ll."

anxious to do all the good I can; and, farther, that I should not appear wanting in gratitude, when any public opportunity presents itself, of confessing myself grateful.

Besides, to you, my Lord Marquis, the fame of the poet Ossian cannot be wholly matter of indifference, after his authenticity has been so long doubted and disputed by many of your literary friends and acquaintance; particularly as "the Reedy Lego" *Legan* of Ossian flows through your paternal park at Moira, on the one hand; and, as it would require no great portion of genealogical research on the other, to prove that your son and daughters are descended from Fingal, as well as from the noble stem which produced the gallant Wallace.* The Campbells and M'Leods are indisputably descended from the Aborigines, or *Celtæ* of the north; and tradition goes farther, and declares the former noble family the lineal offspring of Dermid, one of the sons of Fingal, king of Morven; whose lands are still in their possession, as a part of those of the ancient kings of Atha, in Ulster, continue to this day in the possession of their descendants the present noble family of O'Neill.

The descent of the Campbells, however, before the ninth century, is only recorded in traditionary legends; but in a country unblest with the use of letters, where public events are consigned to man's memory, Tradi-

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* The mother of the great and gallant Wallace, was a daughter of Sir Ronald C[illegible] [illegible]udon, the direct ancestor of the Marchioness of Has[illegible] [illegible]air cousin of Wallace, Susannah, heiress of Loudon [illegible] [illegible]gh Campbell, of Red Castle, 13[illegible] [illegible]nce th[illegible] [illegible]Loudon during the last age

tion, I think, should only be stripped of its exaggerations, reduced to a medium, and that medium, I am of opinion, should be adopted, as being founded in truth. It is known to your Lordship, that Ossian's Poems have been long considered not merely a translation, but a genuine work of the translator and compiler of these ancient songs. And even among the numerous sticklers for, and against, the authenticity of Ossian, we see the doubts almost justified—for in them we perceive, or hear of, nothing but that small and very dubious portion of proof, that "they had heard the pipers or shannahs of the Highlands sing some of the Poems before the translator gave them their English dress."

Had these advocates for authenticity taken a more extended circle, and sought for other more convincing proofs, they might have found them; and I would only have been a gleaner, where now I have reaped largely! For instance, had these friends of Ossian, but read *Buchanan's History of Scotland*, and glanced over the traditional list of Scottish kings, obtained from the Irish *Shannahs* by *Major* or *Fordun*, even *there* they would have seen, that there really had been a king or chieftain of the *Ghael*, named *Fin*, or *Fion*, which placed before *Gael*, gives the poetical name of our hero.* And by comparing dates they would have discovered, that this *Fion Gael* swayed the rude sceptre of Morven, cotemporary with *Caracalla*, the Roman governor of Britain. The mantle of darkness, however, which Time threw over the list

* Gawin Douglas also mentions a —
———— "Fin Mac Coul,
"Wha pinch'd the Deil, and gart him youl!"

of Scottish kings or chieftians, were too heavy, even for Sir George Mackenzie to draw aside, or remove! But, admitting, however, that the list of *Fortun* or *Major* should be brought against me on *this point*, Is the credit due to the Irish Bards greater than that which is due to those of Fingal's country, who sung his deeds from age to age, from father to son? I should hope not! but I am almost betrayed into an argument, instead of a Dedication.

Hence, my Lord, Buchanan, who wrote two hundred years before Ossian was brought to light in England, cannot be considered my partizan—for I am the first who called him in to aid Ossian—nor can we suppose that this Fion, Fin, or Fingal, of whose mention in history, even Macpherson appears to have been ignorant, was only a king of Buchanan's imagination! For I am of opinion, that, though Edward the First, of England, destroyed the ancient Scottish records, yet if there be any of the middle-age historians of that country deserving of credit, Buchanan is that historian. —Now Buchanan, though apparently ignorant of Fingal, appears to have been well informed of poems and martial songs in the Highlands, which, I think, we may safely infer were those of Ossian; for he records their existence in the following words: And it would be absurd to imagine, now that the Highlands have been gleaned over and over again, that the songs alluded to by the learned historian, were any other than those of Ossian; which, I think, there cannot be a doubt, were handed down from father to son, through the memories of the senachies or bards, from the time of the Romans. *Buchanan* writes of the natives of Morven. "They sing songs not unelegant, containing the ulo-

"gies of *valiant men*, and their bards ordinarily handle "no other subject; their language is somewhat like the "old *Gawlish*."*

No one knows better than your Lordship, that bards have ever been found as noble in friendship, as they have been held formidable and dangerous in strife. I need not go back to the days of Tyrtæus to illustrate my opinion, or prove that noble minds have ever chosen bards for their friends, not from fear, but from the nobility of their souls and natures; whilst, on the contrary, little minded tyrants have either wholly neglected, or persecuted, the favourites of the muses! The following curious instances of both sides of the proposition are, I think, not unworthy of a place in this Dedication, because it will in some measure bear out the coincidence of the manners of all the northern nations. I shall commence with an age emerging from the darkness of Gothic night, and there find Ossianic manners and customs.

William of Malmsbury writes of the Normans on the *night preceding* the battle of Hastings. *Tunc cantilena, Rollandi inchoata ut martium viros exemplum pugnatores accenderet.*† And, on the same subject, says Voltaire, of the chief bard or singer—*Le Taillefer après avoir entonné le chanson que les soldats repetoient, se jetta le premier parmi les Angloise, et fut tué.*‡ This proves that armies being preceded by their bards or singers, is *not* peculiar to the Irish, Scots, or Welsh.||

* *Lib.* 1, *p.* 24, *folio edit.* † *Lib.* 3, *p.* 101.

‡ *Voltaire, add. Univ. p.* 69.

|| *Muriatori* cites a passage from an old Italian chronicle, which proves that the song of Oliver and Roland, if that be the one alluded to by William of Malmsbury, was not confined to armies,

But to take the subject farther into antiquity than the Conquest, we find the customs of the Irish, Welsh, and Scots exactly the same with the northern nations, where the *Scaldi* had ever to advance before the troops on the eve of an engagement. Hence the frequent "beguiling away of the night by song" of Ossian, would carry him farther into antiquity than the Conquest, were there no other proofs! Bishop Nicholson represents the Irish bards, at one time, as having gained great part of their lords' lands by their praises; and he also adds, that they were very tenacious of their power; and, owing to their influence, very disorderly. This is corroborated by Baron Finglas, who wrote in the time of Henry the Eighth, and proposed not only severe regulations and decrees against the rhymsters and minstrels, but also against the Shannahs, who were the Irish geneologists.

Hollinshed also states, that if the Irish bard was not well paid for his panegyric, he turned libeller immediately; and if his audience did not pay proper attention to his music or poetry, he commanded silence in the most imperious manner. So much for the Irish bard. But the poor Welsh bard, who, in the language of Drayton's Pollyalbion—

> "At the *Stethva* oft obtained a victor's praise,
> "Had won the silver harp, and worn Apollo's bays;

had reason to complain, as well as the Irish bard, before the time of Baron Finglass; and the statute 4th of Henry the Fourth, Cap. 27, directs a sort of anathema against the Welsh bard in the following words:

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but was also represented as a play, a stage having been erected at Milan and other parts. *Super quo histriones cantabant sicut modo cantatur de Rolando et Oliverio. Ala Ronscevalles!*

"There shall be no waster, rhymer, or minstrel, or other *vagabond*, to make assemblies or collections." It appears, however, by the laws of Hoel, the Welsh Justinian, that there were good political reasons, long before, and after, the time of Edward the First, for abolishing the Welsh bards and harpers, as "they were the *Tyrtæuses* on every expedition against the English." I have now to finish these, perhaps unnecessary, as useless, citations, by observing that, notwithstanding the friendship of Milton, the Protector Cromwell, appears to have had but an indifferent ear for music, by the following Ordinance of 1656: "Any minstrel or fidler, who shall be making music in any inn or tavern, or shall ask any one to *hear* his music, shall be punished as a *sturdy beggar*!" Such was the little minded tyrant.

From some of the foregoing citations, I infer, that though the *later* Welsh and Irish bards were compelled to be silent, yet, as the mountains of Scotland were never trodden by the feet of conquerors, and as their bards and shannahs were exempt from the political power of those who would have crushed them, so having full and free scope for their legends, songs, and traditionary tales, there is *greater* reason to believe that the Poems of Ossian are authentic, and as old as they are represented to be—namely, compositions of the fourth and fifth centuries.

It is now only for me to observe, that as Dr. Hugh Blair,—who may fairly be denominated the Bossu and Aristotle of our times- has, after a laborious, elegant, and just criticism, in which he has fairly placed the various beauties of the two great poets of antiquity in the scale with those of our Celtic bard, and found that

their delicacy, beauty, and sublimity were equally possessed under a ruder sky, by Ossian—who is confessed a stranger to the civilization of the Greeks and Romans—so I cannot but feel confident that the Poems of Ossian, authenticated, and their Irish Scenery demonstrated, as a means of proving their originality, will be agreeably received by a Lord of Loudon from a clans-man of that ancient and honourable family.

And I have the honour to be,

My Lord Marquis,

In feelings of gratitude,

Your Lordship's very obedient,

Humble servant,

HUGH CAMPBELL.

PREFACE.

IN an argument, on geography, purporting to embrace only a small tract of country, frequently alluded to, in various forms, by the poet, it is scarcely possible to avoid a sort of tautology while speaking of the different manners in which the scenes are noticed: at the same time to arrange the following citations and remarks under separate heads, would require more time than the author can well bestow on the subject: besides, he thinks that it would be no furtherance of his object; but, on the contrary, tend to divest them of a portion of their strength and bearing. Were it possible to trace Fingal, and his son, with that precision that we can trace the hero of the Æneid from his setting out from Troy to his landing in Italy; then, indeed, we might insist upon order of time in the quotations; but every reader of Ossian's Poems is aware that their unison will by no means answer the purpose of such uniformity; for, perhaps, owing to the loss of some of the Poems, in one page the hero is bounding over the waves to Lochlin, and in the next, at the feast of shells in Morven, or in battles of the spear on Lena.—The interim being often unaccounted for.

It is now for me to add, that this work, trifling as it may seem, has cost me more exercise of intellect, than a work ten times larger has done, which is now before the Public; and, if in the following dissertation

or argument, I should fail to impress upon the reader's mind a true idea of the Irish scenery, alluded to by Ossian, I trust that I shall not fail to prove, by a very simple fact, recorded in history, that *Fion na Gael* or *Fingal*, reigned over Morven, and Ossian sung in Selma.

In this edition of Ossian's Poems, I think it due not only to the Public, but also to the Bookseller, to omit all the *verbiage* of former sticklers, editors, and commentators, and leave Ossian standing before posterity on the two rocks upon which I have now placed him—Geography and History! which, with the Translator's Dissertations, and the elegant Critique of Dr. Blair, are, in my humble judgment, sufficient to convince the most incredulous, that Ossian was the first of British Poets!

It is really laughable to hear some of the old school Highlanders observe, that, " it is nothing to read the translation of Ossian's Poems, but to read them in the original *Gallic*, would electrify a man." On this I have only to observe, that before the labours of Macpherson to write the poems down in *Roman letters*, —which he commenced with reluctance—and in a mode of orthography, by no means the most natural, or harmonious, of which he may be called the father—the *system*—an *imitation* of the Phenician Irish—being since called *Gallic*, it would have been no easy matter to have read the Poems in that tongue—*Gallic* books and MSS. being as scarce in the Highlands, as kitchen ranges were before that period. Many of these *Gallic* boasters have yet to learn that, on the confession of *Ossian, himself*, some of the most beautiful episodes and poems, that are embodied in his works, and cre-

dited to him, are the compositions of the Irish bards Ullin, Carril, Olla, and others, the friends of his family; or of Cairbar, king of Ireland; and, that though Fingal was a native of Morven, yet the Celtic Gauls of his mountains should confess their inferiority to Ireland—their mother country—in the early ages. The best proof I can give of the fact is, that Ireland had letters of her own—and the art of writing—Scotland—all her historians agree—had neither. Hence it is, that in awarding the palm, and giving Ossian to Scotland—his mother Roscrana being an Irish lady—I would not outrage the merits of the Sister Country; which, I agree with Archbishop Usher, sent a colony to people the north west parts of Scotland, at least, in the person of Fergus, to govern those who were already in it! It may be expected that I should say something respecting the efforts of the late Mr. Laing against Ossian. To this I reply, that Ossian will sit sublime upon the hill of winds, and the music of his harp shall be extolled, ten thousand years after the puny libeller and *parallel passage hunter* shall have been forgotten! His *originals*—as he termed them—of Ossian, are in general inapplicable to the passages selected, and would shrink at the most superficial criticism. Let him who doubts, examine the facts. If authors were to be judged of by the severe test of similarity or analogy, hard indeed would be the case of some of our living poets. For instance, Lord Byron's beautiful Picture of Zuleika, in the Bride of Abydos, would have for its original the first lines in the second part of Campbell's Pleasures of Hope—Roger's Pleasures of Memory would be but a poor imitation of Campbell and Goldsmith; and the Lyrist

Moore would have turned the Arabian Nights Entertainment, into a rambling rhyme, in imitation of Lord Byron's poetical Turkish stories. My task is completed, and the Public, which I have long served, as well in the fields of Mars, as in those of Apollo, will best judge of the credit due to Ossian, from the respective arguments *pro* and *con* of Messrs. Laing and Campbell.

Like the Translator, I once thought of turning the Poems of Ossian into blank verse or rhyme, but upon reflection, and trial, I found that they would lose in true dignity and poetical merit by the change. The following Irish pastoral, which I found in the style of Ossian, may stand as a specimen of my rhyming powers; it is attributed to Carolan; some say to a bard of the 12th century.

EVELINA.

The day slowly rose o'er the white blossom'd thorn,
That exhal'd Eden's sweets from the brow of the vale;
And soft, and delightful, and gay was the morn,
When in sweet crimson blushes 'twas kiss'd by the gale.

'Twas a rose, dress'd in smiles, on that beautiful dawn,
When the season laugh'd on me, in joy's fervent glow,
Drew Love from my soul, as I pac'd o'er the lawn,
And to thee, Evelina, its wanderings would flow.

Rise, rise, Evelina, thou soul that informs,
And ever bestows me Love's exquisite bliss;
For lovelier than morn are thy soft virgin charms,
And sweeter than zephyr-press'd roses thy kiss!

And thy breath, like the sweet apple blossoms in May,
Diffuses perfume in the sphere where it moves;
And thy locks do the raven's gloss'd pinions display,
Whilst the swan's silvery down shows thy smooth neck of loves.

Than the morn in her blushes, more lovely thou art,
Or the rifled rose weeping its soft tears of dew—
Lov'd pride of the western shores—pride of my heart!
Oh, rise, and my soul's fading pleasures renew.

Not the sky, when from swift dancing sunbeams its smiles
In ether's soft purity—mantled in blue,
Serener can seem, than thy face and the wiles
Of thy rich honied lips, give me joys ever new!

From thy bosom the dear witch of love ever heaves
Soft enchantments—her magic is over me thrown—
Rise, rise, Evelina! thy true lover grieves!
Oh, wake, ere his hopes, joys, and blessings have flown!

Oh, could my love hear me, as round the lone vale,
I breathe forth my soul to the still passing wind—
Could she hear how I tell her lov'd charms to the gale—
Evelina to sleep would no more be inclin'd!

The sun-beams descend now, ah, jealous of thee,
And kiss thy sweet cheeks, and inhale thy sweet breath:
Whilst less scented odours are left unto me,
To reluctantly draw from the red blossom'd heath.

By the lofty rock's base, that in grandeur and pride
Hangs high o'er the vale, I will strawberries cull,
And the dark auburn hazel nuts take to my bride,
Whose bosom with goodness than such is more full.

And oh, may the berries be ripe as her lips,
And the nuts sweet as milk in my lovely bride's breast!
Now my fancy exalted by hope, pleasure sips,
And in woods of Miscothér by me she is prest!

As the lorn son of rocks,* I am lonely become!
How long, Evelina, how long wilt thou sleep?
Oh, wake, queen of smiles, with thy lover come home,
To the bower of Miscother, nor leave me to weep!

Ah, dost thou not hear me, my young darling bride?
Does the meekest eyed daughter of mothers' not hear
Oh, I will approach thee, my youthful soul's pride,
Then list to the lay of thy lover sincere!

Whenever thou com'st, Evelina, lov'd maid,
Thine approach is like summer to children of frost;
And with rapturous welcome thy steps are repaid,
Whilst the daughters of beauty, love's harbinger boast.

Then rise, Evelina, and on with me haste,
Renew all my joys by thy gentle return!
Oh, rise, nor let moments of happiness waste,
Nor more round the vale let thy Sylvanus mourn.

For, without thee, the sun's brightest splendour is gloom,
And Sorrow's dark feeling drives joy from my breat.
Without thee, oh, joyless is life, as the tomb,
And the season's gay features with grief overcast.

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* A Druid, so named in ancient poetry, from their living in woods and caves of the rocks. *Vide* Ossian.

THE

DATA OF THE MAP;

BEING

An Argumentative and Geographical

DISSERTATION,

TENDING TO ILLUSTRATE THE SCENES ALLUDED TO IN THE

Poems of Ossian,

AND TO PROVE THEM AUTHENTIC AND ORIGINAL.

BY HUGH CAMPBELL, ESQ. F.A.S. ED.

(In this Edition of the Poems the Text of Macpherson is used.)

Though the Plains of our battles *are dark* and *silent*, and our fame is in the *four grey* stones, yet the voice of Ossian *has been* heard, and the harp *was* strung in Selma.—*Ossian, in Berrathon.*

The antiquary will perhaps ask,—Did Macpherson, or any of the Highlanders from whom he got the Poems of Ossian, ever visit Ireland?---Never! Do any of the ancient histories, books, traditions, or maps, pourtray the places which I have compared to the descriptions o Ossian, and discovered to be the same?—None!

Then the question of the authenticity of that Poet must be for ever incontrovertibly established by the following *Data*, which carries up their antiquity some centuries beyond the conquest.

NOTICE TO CELTIC AND GAELIC ANTIQUARIES.

Having compressed the substance of four hundred pages of observations, remarks, and grounds for conclusions, into the following brief *data*, it will appear obvious in such a case, that with me a smooth or elegant style was a secondary or more remote consideration; a forcible, clear, and perspicuous argument, capable of demonstrating the reason and truth of my system, being in this case the summit of my ambition. I wish it to be clearly understood, that I have seen or read almost all the works that have been written concerning Ireland; but, as a painter of poetical scenery, I am not called upon to give my opinion on their respective merits. I leave endless and unsatisfactory controversy, relative to the early History of Ireland, to Ledwich, O'Connor, O'Halloran and M'Dermott to settle as they best can.

"Who can decide, when doctors disagree?"

The family of O'Neill derive that appellation from a warrior prince of their family named *Nigel* or *Niall*, called by the Shannahs "Neill of the Nine hostages, or Neal the Great," by a Welsh Princess; he lived in or about the fourth century, according to the Irish historians; but I carry him three generations beyond Cairbar, who slew Oscar. And in consequence of his being lineal in descent from Cairbar of Atha, King of the North, I have applied the noun O'Neill to his progenitors, merely to contra-distinguish them from the Celtic warriors of Ossian.

Cathluan, the traditional ancestor of the clan Campbell, who led the colony of Dal-riada from Ulster to Morven, was the first of 69 Kings or Chieftains of Argylleshire, previous to the time of Fingal---and as the proximity of Ulster to Morven enabled the colony to communicate with the Mother Country, so the sending of the latter to Morven for assistance, is but natural, and not to be doubted.

DATA OF THE MAP.

As the celebrated Lord Kames, and Doctors Blair and Whitaker, have employed a portion of their time and abilities, in an attempt to ascertain the existence, and fix the era of Ossian—but have not succeeded—so, in a collateral walk with these celebrated men, I have to lay some brief observations and remarks before the Public; which, after a long, laborious and expensive investigation, I have been enabled to make, on the battle-field scenery of Fingal, in Ireland—as it is developed in the allusions and similes used by Ossian: —the greater and prominent part of which scenery, however time may have levelled the rude race, whose elegant and soul-stirring Poet marshalled it in the most enchanting manner, remains as when it was embodied into songs that are coeval with it; and, with its lakes and mountains, will go down to posterity.

Although in the following remarks and argument, I am often led to offer my opinion from the analogy of names, places, &c. yet I am answerable for the correctness of any, and of all the observations which I have made on the face of the country, during my brief tour, and in the following enquiry. At the same time, I cannot but regret, that the many similitudes and allusions which I have quoted from Ossian, to strengthen my conjectures and conclusions, are not so clearly arranged as I could wish they were; for, to bear out my

argument, I am induced to cite many passages in a desultory manner, as I find them in my progress through the Books of Fingal, Death of Cuchullin, Temora, &c.

After a lapse of fourteen hundred years since the time of Ossian, it was an acknowledged difficult task to come to any correct determination, on the identical places mentioned by the Poet, as frequented by rude warriors, who were wholly unacquainted with the arts and sciences—at least by men who have left but few conspicuous monuments of their battles and victories after them!—the exceptions being comprized in a few caves and rough stones, which are often in the way of the plough; and, consequently, liable to be removed at the will of the agriculturist.* Difficult, however, as

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* Here I would be understood as writing of a hilly country, which of course is less liable to such revolutions as are known to have frequently occurred in low and level countries, particularly on the sea coast. Such, for instance, as the overflowing of Earl Godwin's estate, on the coast of Kent—now called the Godwin Sands—and the abandonment of the sea in the upper part of the Levant, particularly in the *supposed* neighbourhood of the *Troad.* A proof of this is, that opposite to the isle of Tenedos, where, Homer informs us, the Greeks pulled their ships and gallies upon the Dardan beach, there is not any beach to be seen, but, on the contrary, a bold rocky coast, the lowest of whose cliffs is many feet above the level of the sea. This fact I observed in person, and mention it, either to prove some great mutation of nature in that vicinity, or that Homer was ignorant of the locality which his muse embraced—a circumstance not very probable, from the father of the Poets being a native of these parts. I am of opinion, however, that the abandonment of the waters in the upper part of the Levant, is in some measure corroborated by the sacred writings; even though the story of Hero and Leander should not be admitted as auxiliary evidence, which I think it should,

the task appeared, I considered it far from being im practicable, during several years I was travelling in other parts of the Globe, in my country's service, in which I have been unremittingly employed from my boyhood—hence my wishes to attempt the discovery of the celebrated, but long hidden, and doubtful fields of Fingal's battles, were thwarted by more important employments, and the result consequently delayed.

Feeling conscious, however, that the Poems of Ossian are not, nor cannot, have been, the productions of any *modern* bard, I embraced the first opportunity which peace gave me on my return to Europe in 1816, and then commenced my topographical labours. In these I plodded on from one discovery to another, like a student in Euclid, finding a side by an angle, and *vice versa*, until, in my own opinion, I com-

for it is not possible that the enamoured swimmer could have made such sure and constant passages through the waters of the Hellespont, had the currents ran with the same velocity in his days, as they run at in those of Lord Byron. If I rightly understand the sacred writings on one point, it is clear to my mind, that the ships of Solomon sailed from the ports of Tyre and Sidon, to the islands of the eastern seas—and, of course, found *a channel* where are now the scorching sands of the Isthmus of Suez. This, however, is conjecture, arising from my own observation; but the rise of the waters in the English Channel is matter of historical record—Anno 1100. I have yet to enlarge my note by observing, that the story of a country named Leones, extending from Cornwall round by the Scilly Isles, and from Ushant to Guernsey, on the French coast, appears to me in every feature of probability. Perhaps Strabo alluded to Leones, instead of to the Scilly Isles, when he speaks of the Tyrians trading thither for tin! This I know, that on my visit among the isles or rocks of Scilly, I could discover no traces of mines or minerals, whether ancient or modern.

pletely succeeded in proving Ossian to have been the *first* of British poets.—Dr. Hugh Blair having, in my humble judgment, deservedly pronounced him the greatest of the bards of our isle. In unison with an early and long established wish to know the fields of heroes, I proceeded first to the Highlands of Scotland, thence to the opposite coast of Ireland, where I commenced a laborious and strict enquiry into the ancient and modern names of the districts of that part of Ulster, which lies opposite to the western coast of Scotland, where I was so far fortunate as to soon discover what I considered a key to the wished for object—but this was not easily ascertained.

Every reader of history is acquainted with the devastating wars in Ireland, from the time of Elizabeth, to the time of Cromwell; and, of *his* more than retaliation of the cruelties committed by the Papists on the Protestants. His laying Ulster waste, by killing, or driving the Catholics from that province to the south and west of Ireland, and planting in their place his colonies from England and Scotland, has almost effectually shut out from the enquirer after antiquities in the north of Ireland, particularly in Antrim county, a great portion of the information which he might have otherwise obtained from the descendants of the Aborigines. Hence, as I found many of the best informed people in Ulster wholly unacquainted with the original names of places in the neighbourhood of the, *then* only *imaginary* scene of Fingal's actions in that province; and, as history is *almost* silent* on the battles fought

* The trifling analogy of some parts of the Poems, alone show us that the Emperor Caracalla lived about this period; but I

by the invincible king of Morven, in favour of his kinsman of the race of Connor, so we may conclude, that, the analogy arising from parts of Ulster, compared with the allusions of Ossian, and the similarity of a few names, aided by the locality, and trifling remains of ancient magnificence and warfare, can alone enable us to come to any correct or reasonable conclusion on the identical fields of battles fought by the kings of Erin, Lochlin, and Morven. I have farther to observe, that, as this work originated in my own mind, and, as in it I fearlessly oppose rocks, mountains, rivers, lakes, and heaths, to the vague and chimerical assertions hitherto brought forward by sticklers for, and against, the authenticity of Ossian; and, as it has been matured by considerable trouble, expense, and research, so I deny having received the slightest assistance from any author, or from any work—even those who were bound by Act of Parliament to assist me, have not only retarded* my success, by delays, but have also insulted me by silence to my representations. The whole illustrations and proofs of the genuiness of these elegant Poems, have emanated from my own in-

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know of no Roman writer who notices any of the exploits sung by Ossian.

* This alludes to a poor association, which shall here be nameless, the greater part of whose members, however, are highly honourable men, but whose *self-elected* directors were *nose-led* by an officious and meddling London attorney, assisted by an American bear-hunter, and an Aberdeen apothecary's illiterate apprentice, now styled a D. M. whose wonderful skill in physic, and Billingsgate oaths and assertions, had him infected lately with *St. Vitus dance* in a court of Justice, where he was *mean* enough to apply to *me*, whom he had insulted, for assistance in his distress.

dustry, and the matchless description of the first of British bards.

Having thus premised, I proceed to offer my observations to a generous Public, and to solicit that indulgence which such an apparent *outre* proceeding requires.

Bating the fanciful assertions of the Irish historians Keating, O'Flaherty, and O'Hallaran, which have long since been proved fabulous, illusive, nugatory, and absurd, by the hand of Time, we find that the frequent descents of Fingal upon the coast of Ireland, were wholly occasioned by the distress or wants of his kinsmen of the Caledonian race of Irish kings; or, more properly speaking, kings of Ulster, by the following descent.

Trenmor, the great grandfather of *Fingal*, had *two sons*—*Trathal*, the grandfather of Fingal! and *Connor*, called by the bards "*Connor the great.*" This Connor appears by Ossian, to have been elected king or chief of Ireland,* and was the ancestor of that

* I would here observe, that the election of Connor to the supreme government of Ireland,—which makes such a conspicuous place in one of the notes to the poems of Ossian—appears to have never been acknowledged by the native hereditary princes of that country; and that it required all the assistance of his friends of Morven, united to the exertions of his adhering subjects, to retain for himself and race, the small portion of Ulster, which the map will show you bounded on the east and west by the rivers Legon and Bann, and, on the north and south by Lochneagh, and the Irish Sea. If such an election took place, it is but natural to imagine that it was dictated by the wants of some puisne prince, whose power or right was doubted by his neighbouring chieftains; and, consequently, like the later case, that called Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, to Ireland, and ultimately vested

Cormac who sat on the Irish throne, when Swaran, king of Norway, or *Lochlin*, invaded Ireland, and Fingal held the sceptre in *Morven*.

The principal residence of this race of Irish monarchs, Ossian informs us, was at *Temora*, in *Ulster*. This *Temora* was at the foot of the hill of *Mora*, which rose near the borders of the heath of *Lena*, or *Moi-Lena*, near the mountain *Cromla*.

Before I make any observations on *Temora*, I find it necessary to make a retrogade movement to the *coast of Ulster—Ullin*.

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the lordship of that excellent island in the hands of the English monarch.

Since writing the above, I have discovered a legend that throws some light upon the first assumption of power in Ulster by the grand uncle of Fingal. The tradition states that the prince or king of Ulster, of the family of O'Neill, being hard pressed by the colony called the *Belgæ*, which had *then* lately settled in Connaught, invited the chief of Morven, of the race of Fergus, to send some troops to his assistance against the Belgæ!—This was amicably complied with by the king of Morven, but previous to the arrival of his troops in Ireland, a battle had taken place between O'Neill and the Belgæ, in which that prince and all his kinsmen were killed, leaving only one son, then an infant. The Pictland Scots attacked the fatigued Belgæ, and completely defeated them, with great slaughter. The young prince, O'Neill, being an infant, Connor, from this victory, sirnamed Connor the Great, assumed the protectorship of the young O'Neill's territory, and shortly after died, leaving a son named Artha, who entirely, and against the expressed will of his father, broke his faith, dispossessed the young O'Neill, and was proclaimed king by his Scots army.—Hence the origin of the Caledonian kingdom in Ulster, and the frequent battles of Fingal in that province. The son of this usurper was stabbed in the palace at Temora (Connor), by the rightful prince O'Neill, who was afterwards killed in battle by Oscar; but his offspring are still Lords in Ulster.

We are often told by the royal bard—"we rushed into *Carmona's bay*,"* and, "into *Tura's bay*," thence we see frequent, and immediate allusions to *Cromla*, *Lena*, and *the lake of reedy Lego*; all, apparently, in the neighbourhood of these two places. This account of the amiable poet, makes the Carmona of the ancients the *Pisgah*, whence I have discovered the land promised to my exertions by hope.

From local circumstances, aided by a little explanation and assistance of a descendant of the Aborigines, I had little difficulty in ascertaining the ancient Carmona, to be the modern Carmony. The village or hamlet stands on a hill, or gentle acclivity, extending from the shore of Belfast-Loch, and about half way between Belfast and Carrickfergus,—which Carrickfergus, there is not the slightest doubt in my mind, was the *Tura* of the ancient *Celtæ*,—but of *Tura*, more hereafter. Here commences that range of hills, which I have every reason to believe were the eastern boundary of the *Heath of Lena*, having Cromleagh—*i. e.* high-hill in the centre. These hills extend in a south-west direction; and after running as the western boundary of that beautiful and extensive valley, through which flows the river *Legon*—which I have ascertained to be the same which Ossian styles "*the reedy Lego*"—the range or chain of hills declines above *Loughneagh*—which I have since ascertained to have been Ossian's "*Lake of Roes*"—at, or near, a place

* Carmona's Bay—i. e. Bay of dark brown hills—an arm of the sea in the neighbourhood of Selma. This powerfully supports my opinion noted in the appendix, that the white abbey between Belfast and Carrickfergus, and on the shore below Carmona, is one of the Selmas of Ossian.

now called *Cromlin*, which noun, I presume is altered or derived from the ancient *Cromleagh*.

The part of the range, however, which the poet calls "*Misty Cromla*," I take to be that high hill, or mountain, of lime stone, which stands between *Carmony* and *Belfast*: that, from its having three large and beautiful caves cut in its perpendicular side, like those at Gibraltar, is now designated by the less poetical title of the *Cave-hill*; which, at certain seasons of the year, is a place much frequented by parties of pleasure from Belfast, over which town it nods in awful grandeur. The highly poetical address of the Irish bard *Ullin*, or *Ulster*, to the Druid, occurred to my mind, on visiting two of these celebrated and beautiful caves—the third being dangerously difficult to approach! "Why, son of the cave of the rock," &c. These caves were certainly places of shelter or worship to the early inhabitants of Ulster.

In the first Book of Fingal we find Cuchullin sitting by the *wall of Tura—a castle on the coast of Ulster*—"his spear leaned against the *mossy rock*, whilst the other chiefs had gone on a hunting excursion to *Cromla*, *a neighbouring hill!*" Now it is particularly necessary for Ossianic critics to look at the convincing force of this passage of Ossian, in favour of my system. The analogy of other scenes has clearly confessed and proved the *Cave-hill* to have been the *Cromla* of the poet. Hence it is only natural to imagine that this castle of *Tura*, on the coast of *Ulster*, where Cuchullin sat, is the *Carrickfergus castle* of our times; of which, like Dundonald castle in Ayrshire, there are no authentic records to tell us when it was built. From the highest part of the

celebrated hill of *Cromla*, *Carrickfergus* is only about *four* miles distant, and it is built upon a rock on the shore—rising from a level sandy beach—in which is an ancient and spacious *cave!* This venerable and celebrated castle lies almost directly opposite to *Campbeltown*, in *Morven*, which I have every reason to believe was the seat of Fingal's government in that part of Scotland. Hence it is the most likely place to effect a landing from any part of that country—the castle being bounded on either side by a fine sandy beach, and in the immediate neighbourhood of *Temora*, the royal residence. To know that *Carrickfergus* has no rival in antiquity on the coast of Ulster, and, indeed I might add, on the whole coast of Ireland, is, I think, a convincing proof that the *Tura* of the ancients is the very place now known by us as *Carrickfergus*. To infer otherwise, I conceive, from convincing analogy, would be a perversion of reason, and an act of injustice to the manes of the royal bard.

Having thus briefly ascertained *Tura*, *Cromla*, and *Lena*, we read that the river *Lubar* ran between *Cromla*, and the *hill of Mora*, at whose western foot was the royal residence of the Caledonian race of kings, called *Temora*. From many local circumstances, contrasted with the allusions of the poet, I am disposed to think that there cannot be a doubt but that the little chain of hills embracing *Tardree* and *Cairnærie* is the Mora of the ancients—indeed there is no other hill of any note in that neighbourhood. Hence, on proceeding to the western foot of *Cairnærie* and *Tardree*, I discovered the *mossy ruins* of a time-worn castle at the city of *Connor*, which your map will show you, is nearly in the centre of the county of Antrim. Here

the beautiful lines of the classical Irishmen have their full sway over the imagination.—

"Ah! dark are the halls where your ancestors revell'd,
And mute is the harp that enliven'd the day:
The tow'rs that they dwelt in are awfully levell'd—
The signs of their greatnes are sunk in decay!

Oh, Teamrah!* but 'twas fair to see
Thy court's assembled majesty!
All that man deems great or grand,
All that God made fair;
The holy seers, the minstrel band,
Heroes bright, and ladies bland,
Around the monarchs of the land,
Were mingled there!

Art thou the festal hall of state,
Where once the lovely and the great,
The stars of peace, the swords of honour,
Cheer'd by the ever gracious eye
Of Erin's native majesty
Glitter'd a golden galaxy,
Around thee, great O'Connor!

And did these sacred ivy walls
Once glare with gorgeous tapestry?
And did these mute and grass-grown halls
Once ring with regal minstrelsy?
Chill is the court where the chief of the hills
Feasted the lord and the vassal,
And winter fills with its thousand rills
The pride of O'Connor's castle.†

* The house of the great king, and, doubtless, the *Œmania* of the Irish historians.

† Vide the "Emerald Isle."

The many remains of antiquity in this neighbourhood—such as *ruins*, *caves*, and *stones*, on the scites of battles, render Connor beyond a doubt the *Temorah*, *Teamrah*, or *Œmania* of the ancients. It is situate about twelve miles west of *Carrickfergus—Tura*—and nearly in the angle formed by Lochneagh and the river Bann to the east, on the banks of Kellswater, a tributary of the Bann, or rather the Main water.

There is a tradition extant, that *this was* the residence or castle of a *king* named *Connor*, whose name it still bears!—and, from many concurrent circumstances, I am bold to assert, that all the scenery around *Connor* agrees as perfectly in every point with the description of Ossian, as the scenery around Loch Catrine does with the description of Sir Walter Scott.

The allusions are many which the poet makes to *Connor—Temora*—to cite all of which would be waste of time; but, I shall here observe, that my discoveries, aided by the silence of the Poems on the subject, induce me to believe that the poet and his gallant father never penetrated into the interior of Ireland—and, that their progress seems to have been no farther than the fields of battle on the *Heath of Lena*, and in the vicinity of *Connor*—in consequence of the enemy—whether of the *Belgæ*,* or of *Lochlin*, wishing, nay, attempting to dethrone his young kinsman, the minor king, Cormac, whose wants required and occasioned the frequent descents of his protector Fingal upon Ireland. And I infer, from the Poems, that immediately after he had defeated the enemies of the young king, or restored peace by treaty, he found it

* A colony of Ireland, supposed to be originally from Somersetshire. *C.*

necessary, from his wars with the Romans, Scandinavians, and others, to return to Morven.

I have farther to remark, with respect to the antiquity of the old castle or ruins of Connor, that when Sir Edward Bruce assumed the sovereignty of Ireland in 1316, he found it necessary to reduce this city, which is reported to have been very strong at the time of his invasion; and that he found as powerful, though, to him, not so fatal a resistance here as he did at Dundalk. The castle of the kings was even *then* in ruins, which is a convincing proof of its antiquity.

I have often visited the ruins, and as far as I have been enabled to judge, I imagine the walls to be coeval with those of Carrickfergus castle—Tura—but they are now only a few feet above the surface. Should any doubts be entertained of this castle having been the residence of some of the early potentates of this country, might we not also, and with *much more* reason, doubt the generally accredited tale of the ruins shown at *Dunscaich*, in the Isle of Sky, and the stone to which Cuchullin is said to have fastened his dog Luath? —if one has the most remote or probable foundation in truth, the other is far more than equally, and rationally founded.

Connor was a place of such note in the time of St. Patrick, that the Apostle ordered an abbey—whose ruins are still standing—to be built there. It has ever since been a conspicuous place in the church history of Ireland; and is, I believe, both a Catholic and a Protestant bishop's see—at least it was the former in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and is now joined to Down as a Protestant See, although there is but *one* family

of the church of England residing in the parish! For so effectual were the plans of Cromwell, for the extermination of the Catholics, that this parish, formerly the capital seat of the Catholics in the north of Ireland, contains only three or four Catholic families—and these, I understand, returned to it after the restoration. The majority are Presbyterians, whose ancestors of the *covenant* found an asylum in its neighbourhood from the religious persecutions in Scotland, in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Having thus discovered *Connor*, and ascertained it to be the celebrated *Temora* of the Scots, and Œmania of the Irish, I have to cite a few passages from the Poems that tend to elucidate and to confirm the other places which I have fixed, or rather, mentioned, as being in its neighbourhood; and, as the identical scenes which my ardour and conjectures would make them, by strict analogy, deduced from a comparison of descriptions of the poet, and the observations and discoveries of his editor.

As we proceed in the First Book of Fingal, we find many beautiful allusions made to *Cromla*, as being in the immediate neighbourhood of the *Heath of Lena*, the scene of that Poem. And from the striking appearance of its romantic scenery, and the frequency of mists on its summit, at particular seasons of the year, as noticed by Ossian, we may safely conjecture that it held a conspicuous place in the mind of the poet, which we find to have been fondly stored with all that is grand in nature, and sublime in thought. To know that *Cròmla* is a mountain rising up from the *chain or line* of hills which bounds the *Heath of Lena*, and make one part of my discoveries ascertain and fix the

other, we have only to look at the poet's own description of a battle in that neighbourhood.

"Unequal bursts the song of battle. *Rocky Cromla* "*echoes* round. On *Lena's* dusky *heath* they stand, "like mist that shades the hills of autumn, when "broken and dark, it settles high, and lifts its head "to heaven."

Here, it is to be observed, that the warriors on the dusky heath of *Lena* shouted so loud in battle, that *Cromla* echoed around—a proof, at least, of its vicinity to the *Heath of Lena*, and of the rational grounds upon which I have built my system of proving these admirable and animating Poems, by geographical deductions.

Nathos, nephew of Cuchullin, a native of the Isle of Sky, or Mist, tells his love—his young love *Darthula*, "I remember thy words on *Etha*—a district of "Sky—when my sails began to rise—when I spread "them towards *Ullin*—Ulster—towards the *mossy wall* *of Tura*"—Carrickfergus! Again he says, "I came "to *Tura's* bay; but the halls of *Tura* were silent." Here the young warrior is evidently made to regret the absence of his uncle Cuchullin from *Tura*, which is likely to have been his head quarters as *generalissimo* of the Caledonian-Irish army of the young king Cormac. The many allusions made to *Tura*, particularly tend to place beyond a doubt, the natural conjecture, that one is apt to conceive, on looking at the corresponding positions of Morven—Argyleshire- and *Tura*—Carrickfergus—and prove to us, that it is the very spot known by that name. Duchomar came to *Tura's cave*, and spoke to the lovely *Morna*—"*Morna*, "fairest among women,—lovely daughter of Cormac—

" Cairbar, why in the circle of stones? in the cave of
" the rock alone? The stream murmurs hoarsely: the
" old trees groan in the wind. The lake--Belfast
" Loch--is troubled before thee, and dark are the
" clouds of the sky. But thou art like snow on the
" heath, and thy hair is like the *Mist of Cromla.* Thy
" breasts are like two smooth rocks seen from *Bramo*
" *of the streams.* Thine arms are like two white pil-
" lars in the hall of the mighty Fingal."

This beautiful compliment of the poet, so feelingly and elegantly expressed, I have noted, merely to show that Ossian compares all the enumerated charms of this sorrowing, but lovely woman, to the scenery that immediately surrounded him. Let us examine the facts, and see how conjecture corresponds with the scenery in reality. He was at *Tura's* cave---Carrick-fergus---the small stream that falls into the loch or sea, near it, murmured hoarsely as it were lamenting to see the lovely Morna so sorrowful. Belfast Lough was troubled before her, and even the clouds of the sky seemed to commiserate the fair Morna, and appeared troubled. But still amidst her grief, she was fair and pure as the snow on the *Heath of Lena*---her hair was like the *mist of Cromla!* soft and downy; her breasts were like two smooth rocks seen from *Branno of the streams*---a place ever fondly alive in the memory of the poet---for it was there that he married with his much-loved Everallin, the mother of his son, the young and gallant Oscar. This *Branno of the streams* was near *Lisburn,* and only about six miles from the *Heath of Lena.*

In the second *Book of Fingal,* we find *Carril,* the bard, animating the troops of Cuchullin to courage,

as follows, in the coming battle, in which the ghost of the lately slain Crugal, had foretold the defeat of the Irish army.

"Where," said Carril, "is the fallen Crugal? He "lies forgot on earth; the hall of shells is silent. Sad "is the spouse of Crugal; she is a *stranger* in the hall "of her grief! But who is she that flies before the "ranks of the foe? It is Degrena—Sunbeam—lovely "fair, the spouse of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on "the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is shrill. "Pale, empty, is thy Crugal now! His form is in "the cave of the hill."

Here, the poet most happily incites the army to courage and revenge, by conjuring up the form of a lovely woman in distress—prest and pursued by the foe who had killed her husband—the unprotected widow of one of their chieftains who had fallen in the preceding battle *on the heath of Lena*—whose ghost, he told them in conclusion, "was then in the *cave* of the hill—Cromla—Hill of Caves—no doubt near which they were *then* engaged.

I might farther strengthen my conjecture respecting the scite of *Lena*, and give it to the world as a certainty.

Whilst Fingal and his sons *on Lena*, were arranging the order of the coming battle with Swaran, king of Norway, or of Lochlin,—"Cuchullin, from the *cave* "*of Cromla*, heard the noise of the troubled war!" It is unnecessary to go farther on this head; he must, indeed, be hard of belief who would require any farther citations to prove the *cave-hill*, the *Cromla* of Ossian—the landscape from the second cave of which hill, is decidedly one of the richest and finest in nature.

The principal battles which Fingal fought with the Norwegians, native Irish, &c. appear all to have happened in the neighbourhood of *Connor*. Between Lough Neagh—which analogy proves to have been the *Lake of Rocs*, of Ossian—and "*Ridgy Cromla*," and all round the intermediate space, by *Connor*, and *Mora*, and on to *Carmona*, it is almost impossible to walk twenty minutes without observing some rude vestiges of the times of Ossian. I have penetrated a large and beautiful *cave*, in the neighbourhood of *Connor*, which is capable of holding a thousand armed men. It is separated into various apartments, and covered over with long flat stones of granite. Innumerable are "the four grey stones"—the graves of the illustrious dead—which one discovers whilst travelling amidst the Ossianic scenery. There are also several *moats** or *forths* around Connor. One of these is in as high a state of preservation, as the one at *Carnuath*, in Lanarkshire. These moats or forths, I imagine, were thrown up by the rude warriors of those days, to answer the purpose of hills, and to kindle fires on, when the approach of an enemy rendered such signals necessary.

Some antiquaries, however, have observed, that they were seats of justice, where the chieftain exercised his judicial power; but in Ireland, particularly in the level parts of Ulster, there are more forths than there could have been chieftains, allowing at the rate of four of these artificial mounts to one modern-sized estate. And I may further remark, that I have traced a chain of

* Mr. Walker says, and with some colour of reason, that they were thrown up by the Danes. *Vide* Walker on Irish Bards, &c.

these little eminences, and generally found them at signal distances from each other, and their termination at the foot of a commanding hill or mountain, a proof, I conceive, that their origin was in the want of natural signal stations for the early inhabitants of these countries.

It is clear to me, that the *Lena*, or *Moi-Lena*, mentioned, and alluded to, so frequently by Ossian, is the low lying irregular plain, or tract of country between *Cromla* on the east, and *Mora* on the west. And through this plain runs the *Lubar* river, which, there cannot be a doubt, is that river now known by the less poetical name of the *Six Mile Water*. A branch of this river, from which it takes its name, is a loud and brawling stream—whence its *Gallic* name, *Leubar*--that rises in one of the hills, in the chain of *Mora*, and it may have been, and I think really is, the hill called by the bard, *Cromnall*. The little streamlet *Lavath*, as in the days of Ossian, "rolls behind it in "the still vale of Deer;" and near its banks the Marquis of Donegall has lately erected a beautiful villa called Fisherwick—the Kellswater of the moderns.

In one of the last battles fought by Fingal, in Ireland, he is poetically painted as animating his gallant sons too protect his favourite grandson Oscar, in battle, in the following noble, just, and energetic manner: "Lift up, Gaul, the shield before him. Stretch, "Dermid, *Temora's* spear! Be thy voice in his ear, "oh, *Carril*, with the deeds of his fathers! Lead him "to green *Moi-Lena*, to the dusky *field* of ghosts,*

* An appellation derived from the many battles fought upon it, and it bears out my observations on the numerous stones on and around the heath.

" for there I fall forward in battle! in the folds of war.
" Before dun night descends, come to high *Dunmora's*
" top. Look from the grey skirts of mist on *Lena* of
" the Streams. If there my standard shall float on
" wind over *Lubar's* gleaming stream, then has *not*
" Fingal failed in the last of his fields!"

Here is a beautiful harmony of consistency tending to bear out my conjectures, in the most convincing manner, respecting the relative situations of most of the prominent objects alluded to by the poet. Fingal is on the eve of an engagement on green *Moi-Lena*, and desires the *bard* to go to the top of *Dun-Mora*—*i. e. hill of Mora*—the highest, excepting *Cromla*, in that vicinity, whence he is desired, before the night-fall, to *look down* on *Lena* of the streams, and see the hero's standard floating on wind over *Lubar's gleaming stream!*

Dunmora is about eight miles west of the *Hill of Caves*—*Cromla*—and overlooks *Lough Neagh*—Lake of Roes—and the heath of *Moi Lena*, and from it flows one branch of the *river Lubar*—Six Mile Water.

This last quotation, I consider sufficiently convincing and conclusive, to render my system too formidable to be overthrown. I have yet to add, that the heath of *Lena*, or *Moi Lena*, is the irregular plain country verging from the hills of *Cromla*, and *Mora*; and, that it is known at this day by the *same* name which the poet gave it fourteen hundred years ago. The descendants of the Aborigines, who were under the chieftains of *Cromla*, have given, and left the name *Cromlin*, to a district and village of the *Heath of Lena*, where they were settled so lately as the reign of Elizabeth.[*] This *Cromlin* is distant seven or eight miles

from *Connor—Temora*—or *Œmania*. Let us now briefly examine the proofs relative to the situation of the Lubar river.

" In other days," said Carril, the bard, to Fingal—on his enquiries relative to any chiefs, or men of note, who had been buried near the scite of the battle—" came the sons of Ocean to Erin. A thousand ships " bounded over the waves to Ullin's—Ulster's—lovely " plains. The sons of *Irisfail*—Ireland—arose to meet " the race of dark brown shields. On *Lubar's* grassy " banks they fought, and Grudar like a sun-beam fell, " by the hand of the fierce Cairbar. Cairbar came to " the vale of the echoing *Tura*—Carrickfergus—where " Brassolis - white breast—fairest of his sisters, all " alone, raised the song of grief. She sung of the " actions of Grudar, the youth of her secret soul. She " mourned him in the field of blood—but still she " hoped for his return Her white bosom is seen from " her robe, as the moon from the clouds of the night. " Her voice was softer than the harp, to raise the song " of grief. When shalt thou come, thou mighty of " the war. Take Brassolis, said Cairbar, this shield " of blood. Fix it on high within my hall—the armour " of my foe. Her soft heart beat high against her " side. Distracted pale she flew. She found her " youth in all his blood. She died on *Cromla's heath.*"

Over this heath the unfortunate woman had necessarily to pass, on her way from *Tura*—Carrickfergus—to the *Lubar*—Six Mile Water—which nearly bounds the heath, to the westward, at the foot of the *Mora* chain of hills. When the termination of this melancholy episode is compared with its commencement, " On Lubar's grassy banks they fought, and Grudar

"like a sun-beam fell," &c. we infer that the *Lubar* of the poet is no other than the *Six Mile Water*, one of whose sources is in a branch of the Lora chain of hills, on the north end of Lena, and the other, from which it takes its poetical name—*Lubar*—is in the hills of *Mora*, above *Connor*—Temora. These unite near the village of Doagh, thence the enlarged river flows through the whole extent of the celebrated *heath* or plain of Lena, and falls into the Lake of Roes—Lough Neagh. The unfortunate lady could not have found her lover on the banks of any other grassy stream of consequence, than the *Lubar* between Carrickfergus and the Six Mile Water, which indeed the poet authenticates.

In the Fourth Book of Fingal, Ossian tells Malvina—"Now on *Lena's Heath* the voice of music died "away. The inconstant blast blew hard around me, "and the high oak shook its leaves. Of Everallin "were my thoughts, when she in all the light of "beauty, and her blue eyes streaming in tears, stood "before my sight, and spoke with feeble voice! O, "Ossian, rise and save my son! Save Oscar, chief of "men! *Near* the *red oak of Lubar's stream*, he "fights with Lochlin's sons. I called him like a dis-"tant stream. Oscar, my son, return! No longer "pursue the foe over *Lena!*"

Again, when Starno, king of Lochlin, ironically orders his daughter, the beautiful Agandecca, to be brought to her lovely king of Morven—Fingal—of whom she had become enamoured, "she came with "the loose raven locks. Her white breast heaved with "sighs like the foam of the *streamy Lubar*." These citations, I think, clearly affirm the Six Mile Water

to have been the *Lubar* of Ossian—Nature sanctions the conclusion, whilst the coupling of *Lena* and *Lubar*, which separates it from *Mora*, pourtrays in the clearest manner, the situation of both objects. The mountain branch of *Lubar* is called " *Lubarn*" to this day.

The advice which Connel gives Cuchullin, after his affecting interview with the ghost of Crugal, brings forth a beautiful allusion to the *Hill of Caves—Cromla*. After the chief tells *Connel* to strike the shield of Caithbat, his late father, the poet sings. " High " *Cromla's* head of clouds is grey! The morning " trembles on the half-enlightened ocean, and hides " the sons of *Inisfail!*" Here Ossian in terms distinctly tells me, that the camp of Cuchullin was at, or near, the scite of *Carmona*, where the winds of the morning naturally enveloped the army in the mist or clouds that were passing from the south, westward, over the adjoining *Cromla—Hill of Caves!* Hence the poet's assertion, " we rushed into *Carmona's* bay" —to embark for Scotland—is equally applicable in the other sense, in which he used it, on disembarking from that country. For I think the rushing of ships or boats, and the rushing of men, is a just and highly poetical phrase. *Carmona* being the nearest part of Belfast Loch to the capital *Connor*—Temora—gives another proof that *Cromla* rises *near Carmona*, on the edge or border of the heath of *Lena*. Here I cannot avoid expressing my surprise at the astonishing regularity and consistency throughout all the Poems that have their origin in Ireland; and the additional credit due to *their* authenticity, from every genuine lover of elegant literature, when he reflects on the proportion and beauty, the uniformity and sublimity, they pos-

sess, after having passed through the memories of illiterate men, during a space of fourteen hundred years. But, farther of *Carmona*, which still bears the same name.

From this position, the poet on hearing the *Reveilé* of the army, at the dawn of day, would naturally cast his eyes towards the sea—Belfast Loch—below him, in the hope of observing the enemy advancing. Thence, turning from "the half-enlightened ocean" to the right, his eyes were instantly cheered with the head of his favourite *Cromla*—the Cave hill—covered with the grey clouds of the morning. I have frequently risen at the dawn of day, in the months of June, July, and August, to observe this phenomenon attending on the altitude of the *Hill of Caves*, and have invariably observed the summit of *Cromla* covered with a *grey mist*, a considerable time after all the other hills were clear of the remains of night. So truly and elegantly is it described by Ossian. Again—

"Morning is grey on *Cromla*—the sons of the sea "ascend!" The Scandinavian fleet might have been anchored on any part of the shore between Carmona and Carrickfergus, and yet their army would have to ascend the ridge of *Cromla*, to approach the capital, *Connor*—or its defenders, the Irish army, under the gallant Cuchullin. It appears here, that the general and his forces were encamped on the hill between *Carmona* and the *Cave Hill—Cromla*—for the purpose of protecting the capital, *Connor—Temora*, or *Œmania*—in whose palace resided the minor king, Cormac—whose right, or power, in Ireland, appears to have been productive of hereditary quarrels alike with Norwegians and native Irish Princes. It may not be im-

proper to remark, that the capital, *Connor*, lies beyond, or rather to the westward of, a second ridge or chain of hills from Belfast Loch; and, that between the former, and the one upon which Cuchullin was encamped, lay the heath of *Lena*, and through this ran the river *Lubar*—the *Six Mile Water*. This goes well to corroborate the truth of my system.

After the battle was over, in which the Irish tribes under Cuchullin were defeated by Swaran, king of Lochlin, who, with the defeated warriors, beheld the fleet of Fingal entering the bay—that of *Carmona*, or rather of Carrickfergus—Tura—the conquered hero "drags his long spear behind him, mourns his fallen "friends, and bending sad and slow, sinks into *Crom-"la's* wood! for he feared the face of Fingal, which "was wont to meet him with smiles from the field of "renown." Than this passage, I am not aware that any thing more convincing can be adduced. The poet goes on to say, when Fingal landed in *Tura's* bay, he exclaimed, "the battle is over!—sad is the *Heath of "Lena*, and mournful the oaks on *Cromla!*" Here the analogy of the scenes, and the poetical description, coincide, and the result is incontrovertible—for the *proximity* of *Tura* to *Cromla* and to *Lena*, at once enabled Fingal to declare the state of his fallen friends! Indeed in all the Poems in which the royal bard speaks of Ireland, we observe that *Cromla*, *Lena*, *Lego*, and *Lubar*, supply similes, shelter, battle-fields, and hunting to Fingal, and a haven for his shipping! This is partly accounted for by the ridge of hills which run parallel with Belfast Lough, and bound the *Heath of Lena* to the eastward. On the coast or beach of that arm of the sea, where friends or foes from Lochlin, or

Morven, invariably made good their landing. And, as that boundary of *Lena* towards Tura—Carrickfergus—was a commanding martial position, so it was but natural for the army of *Ulster*, or the allies of the house of *Connor*, to hold possession of it, for the purpose of better keeping the royal residence inviolate. Hence, if I might be allowed to offer my opinion of martial situations, the *whole range of hills*, from *Carmona* to *Carrickfergus*, was one of the most judicious positions that could be chosen, to keep maritime invaders from passing on to *Connor*, the capital.

After the battle in which Fingal conquered and *bound Swaran*, king of Lochlin, Gaul and his brother Ossian were left in charge of the royal prisoner, and "sat with him on the soft green banks of Lubar." This goes far to affirm that the battle was fought in its neighbourhood. "Ossian touched the harp to please "the king, but gloomy was his brow." He rolled his red eye to *Lena*. The hero mourned his host. "Ossian raised his eyes to *Cromla's* brow. He saw the "son of generous Semo—Cuchullin—who had been defeated the day on which Fingal arrived from Scotland—"sad and slow he retired from his hill, towards the "lonely cave of *Tura*." From this description, we gather sufficiently clear and explanatory evidence to convince a world of opposition, and to realize, and place beyond doubt, what I was once disposed to consider as merely probable. To me the passage thus explains itself. The *Scandinavians* had defeated the Irish army under Cuchullin, on the day preceding this battle. The arrival of Fingal, however, prevented *Lochlin* taking advantage of his victory, by marching on to the capital—Temora, or Œmania—*Connor*. In

the mean time, Fingal attacked and routed " the sons of the sea." Hence Ossian's description. *Swaran*, on the banks of the *Lubar*—Six Mile Water—in all the distress of mind natural to a person defeated, rolled his red—or tearful—eye towards *Lena*, to that part of the heath between *Carmona* and *Carrickfergus*, and his own position on the banks of the *Lubar*. And it occurs to me, that he looked in that direction, because he was *there* defeated—his home and friends lay beyond it, as did his fleet, now possessed by the forces of Fingal. These, with his reflections that he was a conquered captive, were sufficient to excite those melancholy ideas which Ossian has introduced in the happiest manner. For his description appears to me to be wound up to a climax of harmony and poetical beauty —whilst the commiserating feeling and delicacy on the part of the bard, is so conspicuous and endearing, that I cannot avoid observing its loveliness.

To better enable *Swaran* to shed the tears, unobserved, from " his red eye," the poet turned towards *Cromla*—that is *sideways* from the king—and while looking upon that favourite mountain, his active and gentle mind experienced a rapid transition, through the delicacy and generous feelings for the defeated *Swaran*, to an amiable sorrow and sympathy for his unfortunate friend Cuchullin, whom he saw, " retiring, " sad and slow, from his hill, to the lonely cave of " Cromla."

Such conduct was every way consistent with the noble mind of the *first* of British bards. To assist my conjecture of the strength of *Lena's-ridge*, near *Cromla*, as a judicious martial position, we read that when the king of the Belgæ—a people of the south of Ire-

"Cromla? Dost thou sleep with the foes in battle, "Gelchossa, white bosomed daughter of the generous "Tuathal? Thou hast been the love of thousands, "but Lamderg *was thy* love! He came to *Selma's* "*mossy towers*, and striking his dark buckler, spoke, "where is Gelchossa, my love? the fair daughter of "the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Selma, "when I fought with the gloomy Ulfadda." I must here digress a moment to observe on the word or *noun* *Selma*, or *Selmath*, which, anglified from the *Gallic*, means a dwelling, or house, beautiful to behold; and we observe, on reading these Poems, that several places merited and acquired that denomination from Ossian. Fingal had a *Selma* in *Morven*, near where stands the modern town of *Campbelltown*, and thence he is poetically named "the king of Selma;" and we read of another *Selma* near *Cromla* and *Tura*—but the *Selma* here alluded to, is evidently meant for the dwelling of Lamderg; and let the house be of what construction soever it might, the situation, and the scenery around it, were well deserving of the appellation "beautiful to "behold." I proceed with the fatal episode. *Allad, the Druid*, replied to enquiries respecting the chiefs, "I saw Ullin, the son of Cairbar. He came like a "cloud from *Cromla*, and he hummed a surly song, "like a blast in a leafless wood! He entered the hall "of *Selma*. *Lamderg*, he said, most dreadful of men, "fight, or yield to Ullin! Lamderg, replied Gelchossa, "the son of battle is not here!—He fights Ulfadda,*

* The English of *Ulfadda* is *long-beard*, an eastern custom retained in the princely family of O'Neill, by which all their followers were distinguished. A statute of Henry the Eighth was directed against them, but the O'Neill's kept their beards; and I

"mighty chief. He is not here, thou first of men,
"but Lamderg never yielded! He will fight the son
"of Cairbar! Lovely art thou, said terrible Ullin,
"daughter of the generous Tuathal! I convey thee
"to Cairbar's halls! Three days I remain on Cromla
"to wait that son of battle, Lamderg—on the fourth
"Gelchossa is mine, if the mighty Lamderg flies!
"*Allad*, said the chief of *Cromla*, peace to thy dreams
"in the cave! Ferchious sound the horn of Lamderg,
"that Ullin may hear *on Cromla! Lamderg*, like a
"roaring storm, ascended the hill from Selma." On this passage I have to observe, that the situation of Lâmbeg could in some measure be the scene of such a description, or occurrence. And from the episode I infer, that Lamderg, the *chief of Cromla*, had his residence of Selma, at the spot to which the moderns have given the name, Lamberg, at the foot of the south-west end of the range or chain of *Cromla*; which, Ossian says, from Ullin, the bard's description, Lamderg ascended, like a roaring storm, to save and rescue his brave and beautiful wife, and avenge himself on her ravisher.

This, I think, is a natural and rational conjecture, when we recollect that the chiefs of the early ages ge-

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am credibly informed, that so late as the great grandfather of the present noble earl, the family retained their *Milesian* customs, in the face of all the prohibitions of the English or Irish parliaments. There is an anecdote related of one of the adherents of the kings of Ulster, on hearing O'Neill proclaimed a traitor. He asked some of his countrymen the meaning of the word "*traitor*," but could not get a satisfactory answer—no one knew it. "Well, my boys," said he, "if it be not a *more* honourable title than prince O'Neill, he won't wear it! he'll send it back within their pale again, and whip the *priest* that would christen him."

nerally resided near rivers, and at the foot of sheltering hills. But I proceed to the sequel of this *Celtic*, not *Dardanian*, rape. " Gelchossa saw the silent chief " like a wreath of mist, ascending the hill. Cairbar, " said the maid of the tender hand, I must bend the " bow on *Cromla*, for I see the dark brown hinds! " She hastened up the hill. In vain! The heroes " fought fierce, Ullin fell!—he was the son of *Cairbar*, " of the line of the present noble family of O'Neill. " Young *Lamderg* came, all pale, to the daughter of " the generous *Tuathal*. What blood, my love, said " the soft haired woman, flows down my warrior's " side? It is Ullin's blood, thou fairer than the snow " on *Cromla!* Let me rest here a little while! The " mighty Lamderg died! And sleepest thou so soon " on earth, oh chief of shady *Cromla?* Three days " she mourned beside her love! On the fourth, the " hunters found her dead! They raised the tomb " above the three! Thy son, oh king of Morven, " may rest here, with heroes! And here my son shall " rest, said the king of the streamy Morven!"

The above beautiful episode, which I consider one of the finest in the Poems, is related by Ossian, as the work of the native Irish bard *Ullin*, Ulster, who we find accompanied Fingal in all his expeditions to Ireland; for the purpose, I presume, of giving the warrior the necessary information respecting that country, in which he *appears to have been a stranger:* and for recounting " the tales of other years;" the history of past times, which we know to have been in the province of the bards; who, unlike those of our times, were on all occasions honoured with the most unlimited confidence by the warriors, whose adherents they were,

and to the strictest attention, intimacy, and I might say, brotherly friendship.

Here I have to remark, that the Irish geneologists describe this *Ulfudda* as the hundred and sixteenth monarch of Ireland. "He was killed at the battle of Gowra, A. D. 284!" *Cairbar* was his son, and this *Ullin*, now killed by Lamderg, was his *grandson!* This fact, if fact it be, will carry the battle of Lamderg and Ullin into the fourth century. The bard *Ulster*, who describes the inmates of the tomb pointed out to Fingal, speaks as if the tragical occurrence had taken place within his own memory. This coincidence of facts, I presume, will place the era of Ryno's death in the middle of the fourth century. Fingal, at that period, was young enough to fight; then surely it is not beyond the pale of reason or probability, that Ossian, the son of Fingal, lived to enter the fifth century!

In the sixth book of Fingal, we find the scene of the Poem, laid on the heath of *Lena* or *Moileny*. I should here observe, that *Moi-lena* is another of the ancient scenes which still retain their former names. The district of Moi-lena is near Antrim, on the estate of lord Hertford. On the mountain *Cromla*, "Fillan "and Fergus," said Fingal, "blow my horn, that the "joys of the chace may arise, that the deer of *Cromla* "may hear and start at the lake of Roes." *The lake of Roes* is evidently the *Lochneagh* of our times. The northern end of this beautiful lake is nearly bounded on the east by the range of hills known to the ancients as *Cromleach*, or the border of *Lena*. *Lena*, I apprehend, was the name of the whole ridge, or range of hills bounding its heath to the eastward, and *Crom-*

leach, the highest part, was applicable to that portion of the ridge that lies to the westward of Belfast, called the *Cave hill*. There is a small district on the west side of the mountain, called *Cromlin*, from the Erse, *Crom-leach*, I presume, which terminates near the town of *Antrim*. The southern end of the range of *Lena* terminates on the estate of the marquis of Hertford; and the highest part is called Dunardro. On the borders of this district, and along the banks of Lochneagh, the deer are yet very plenty, and thrive there better than in any of the deer parks in the north of Ireland.

I shall again digress a little from the subject of places, and remark that the *red oaks*, so frequently mentioned by Ossian, are here very plenty; and many of them appear to be of great age. One, named the *royal oak*, from its extraordinary dimensions, was blown down on the windy Saturday of 1748. It grew in Lord Conway's—now Marquis of Hertford's—deer park, on the borders of Moi-lena. Its dimensions are reported to have been very large for a native oak; the diameter being eighteen feet, and height from the root to the lower branch twenty-six; I have heard it remarked by judges, who calculated by the time which oaks generally take in growing to maturity, that the above oak must have been of considerable size in the time of Ossian, allowing the elapsed time to be fourteen hundred years. "And hereafter shalt thou be victo-"rious," said Fingal, "the fame of Cuchullin shall "grow like the *branchy tree of Cromla*."

Let me briefly add a few farther proofs of my system being grounded in truth. After Swaran was conquered, and generously suffered to depart by his conqueror, Fingal met with, and cheered the defeated

"hero Cuchullin, and while they sung and feasted his "soul arose, and his face was brightened with glad- "ness; and the strength of his arm returned. They "passed the night in joy, and brought back the morn- "ing with song. Fingal arose on the heath, and "shook his glittering spear. He moved first towards "the Heath of *Lena*, and we followed like a ridge of "fire. Spread the sails, said Fingal, and catch the "winds that *pour* from *Lena!*"

This gives me another proof that my system—as the reverend antiquary, Dr. Jameson, of Edin, terms it—is not easily to be overturned. The winds that *pour* from *Lena*, were the winds most necessary to *fill* his *sails* in any part of Belfast Loch, and to waft him to Morven! For that part of *Cromla's* chain, that opens to the Heath of *Lena*, is about six miles to the south and west of Belfast! And as Mr. Macpherson, and the *Shanahs* from whom he orally received the Poems, *never were in Ireland*, and as there is not any maps or descriptions which particularize either *Lena* or the openings, or vallies between the hills into it, so I am bold to assert that *this* citation, itself, is a host against the opponents of my doctrine.

In the third book of Fingal, we read that the *Irish* bard, *Carril*, represents that hero as strong as the waters of *Lora!* There is a small chain of hills running from the hill of *Mora*, or rather a continuation of that hill, which terminates near the seat of Lord Antrim, at Glenarm; it is called *Lora*, with the addition of *Don* to it, which means *a hill!* It lies almost opposite to *Morven*, and distant only about five leagues. The whole chain of mountain is remarkable for white dashing cascades that tumble precipitately down its

side, picturesque and potent in their descent. It is rational and natural to suppose that *this* mountain, with its torrents or cascades, caught the eyes of the elegant poet, on some of his voyages to, or from Erin! And I think it is the *same* hill to which Ossian alluded!

Why art thou so dark, *Slimora*, with all thy silent woods? No green star trembles on thy top, no moon-beam on thy side! The Erse for great hill is *Slieu-mor!* In a note to the first book of Fingal, we find that Cuchullin was killed "*somewhere*" in Connaught. If that was the case, a part of my system is overturned; but I hope I shall make it appear, that the annotator is in this instance blameable for a little inconsistency or error.

In the Poem, "The Death of Cuchullin," after the advice which the hero received the preceding night from the ghost of Calmar, we read that "the faint "beam of the morning rose, and the sound of Caith-"bat's buckler spread. Green *Ullin's* warriors con-"vened like the roar of many streams. The horn of "war is *heard over Lego*—Legon. The mighty Tor-"lath came! 'Why dost thou come with thy thou-"sands, Cuchullin?' said the chief *on Lego!* 'I know "the strength of thine arm, and thy soul is an unex-"tinguished fire! Why fight we not on the *plain*, "and let our hosts behold our deeds?' 'Thou risest "like the sun on my soul,' said the son of Semo! "'Thine arm is mighty, O Torlath, and worthy of "my wrath!—Retire, ye men of Ullin, to Slimor's "shady side! Behold Cuchullin in the day of his "fame!'"

To elucidate this meeting, it is necessary to observe, that during the administration of Cuchullin, in *Ulster*,

Torlath, one of the chiefs of the Belgæ, who were in possession of the south of Ireland, rebelled in Connaught, and advanced towards Te-mora, for the purpose of dethroning the young king, *Cormac*, who, excepting *Ferdath*, afterward king of Ireland, was the only one of the Scottish race of kings—from Connor the Great, the grand uncle of Fingal—existing in that country. Cuchullin marched against the rebel prince, from the neighbourhood of the capital, Connor, and came up with him at the *lake of Lego*, where he totally defeated his forces, and killed Torlath: this victory, however, like that at Quebec and at Trafalgar, was dearly bought to the country, for in the proudest moment, the magnanimous and prudent Cuchullin was mortally wounded by an arrow.

I have now only to observe, that it is the noun *Slimor*—great hill—from whose mention the little inconsistency has arisen; for, on taking a nearer view of the subject, there may have been, and are, many *Slimoras* or great hills; but that which induces me to challenge the error or mis-statement, is, that there is a hill about five miles from *Connor*, that retains the name of *Slieumors!* It is one of the most remarkable hills in Ireland. A proof that it was once covered with wood, is from a moss on its summit whence large oak and fir trees are frequently dug; hence I think the poet used the appellation *Slimora's shady* side! Now is it not probable that the *oral* reporter to the translator of the Poems, may have occasioned this little error?—if it is an error or inconsistency! The reporter, or Shannah, perhaps, unacquainted with the geography of *Ulster*, taking it for granted that Cuchullin was killed in Connaught, because Torlath, his opponent, was a native

of that province, affirmed it to be the fatal place; forgetting, or passing over, the fact, that, "*the battle* "*was fought on the banks* of the *Lego*, or *Legon*." For Ossian tells us that his friends who came to his assistance from Scotland—"By the darkly rolling "waves of the *Lego*, raised the hero's tomb! *Luath* "at a distance lies the companion of Cuchullin at the "chace." Here is positive proof that the battle was fought on the banks of the *Legon*, and I state that it is a well known fact, that our forefathers of the remote ages, who had the honour of falling in the service of their country, were always rewarded with a grave on the field of their glory, as a place the most apposite and honourable that could be chosen by warriors while living; or assigned by their friends and survivors when dead.

About a mile distant from Belfast, there is an ancient burial ground on the *banks of the Legon*. Tradition reports *it* to have been a place used for that purpose before the days of St. Patrick, by whom it was consecrated. The moderns call it "*Friar's bush*," and I have no doubt but that it had its origin as a place of sepulchre in some of the battles of the early ages. For even in the most rude and barbarous nations, particularly in Africa, America, and in parts of Asia, I have witnessed the most careful and reverential attention paid to the dust once blessed in the human form; and farther, a particular desire of succeeding generations to be mingled with, or gathered to, their forefathers "in the narrow house." Hence I think it is within the bounds of probability, that *Friar's bush* is the grave of *Cuchullin!* Ossian says, in corroboration of this conjecture, "We came to *Lego's mournful banks,*

"we found his *rising tomb.* His companions in arms "were there, and bards of many songs!" On the result of this analogy, I do not think it necessary to make any other observations. It is obvious to the candid critic, that I am not building on vague foundations.

In the Poem "Darthula," we find mention made of Cairbar sitting at a feast "in the silent plain of "*Lona.*" And again, *Larthmor* "is before us, he that "fled from Fingal at *Lona.*" The English of *Lona*, is a gradually rising ground from a marshy plain.

On the banks of the *Legon*, and only a short distance from the *supposed* grave of Cuchullin, commences a rising plain, which is now covered, in a great measure, with country seats of gentlemen whose business is in Belfast. Time, the great changer of all things, or the difference of the Erse and Gallic dialects, may have let in the *Moi* to *Lona*; for the plain or district is now vulgarly pronounced *Malone.* This is the only place whose modern name near the scene of action, has the slightest resemblance to the original of the poet. Hence it is, that I am inclined to think the analogy of preceding scenes gives me reason to conclude this *Moilona* the *Lona* of Ossian - which noun he himself may have abridged, on the principles of the poetical licence; the name being much less poetical at full length, than when contracted.

After the death and defeat of Cuchullin, we read that Cairbar, taking advantage of his victory, advanced along *Lego's Lake*—Belfast loch, at the confluence of the Legon—to the sea-coast, where he expected Fingal, who meditated an attack, or rather prepared an expedition, to establish his kinsman on the throne of

Ireland. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was the castle of *Tura*—Carrickfergus—where the landing from Scotland was generally effected.—And into it the sons of Usnoth, and nephews of Cuchullin, were driven by a storm, without the possibility of escaping from their enemy, Cairbar. " Distinct is the voice of " Cairbar,"* said Nathos, " and loud as *Cromla's* " falling stream."

Could this allude to the small river that rises in the ridge of Cromla near *Lena*, and gurgles down the side of the mountain, past *Cromlin*, till it loses itself in the Lubar and *Lake of Roes*?—Lochneagh. " Cairbar " had seen the dark ship on the sea before the dusky " night came down. His people watch on *Lena's* plain " —the north-west end of the hill, lying along the " road from *Belfast* to Carrickfergus—and lift ten " thousand spears!" " And let them lift ten thousand " spears, said *Nathos*, with a smile; the sons of Car- " borne Usnoth will never tremble in danger! Why " dost thou roar with all thy foam, thou roaring sea " of *Ullin*—Ulster? Why do ye rustle on your dark " wings, ye whistling tempests of the sky?" These, however, forced the gallant brothers into *Tura's*—*Carrickfergus*—bay, among the ten thousand spears of Cairbar, which prevented them raising the song of joy in *Conor*, Temora, or Œmania.

In the Poem of Croma, we find *Croma* a country in lovely *Inisfail*—Ireland—but I can observe no allusion in the Poem, by which I can trace any conspicuous object, or the province it is in; although it is highly

* Progenitor of the present noble family of *O'Neill*, who had now cleared their country of the usurpers. *C.*

probable it was in some part of Ulster:—this I would infer from its proximity to *Morven*. There is a small district in the county of Down, commencing on the banks of the *Legon*, a short distance from *Belfast*, and nearly opposite to *Friar's Bush*: it is called *Cromac*; which, after intersecting the beautiful villages of *Newton-breda* and *Castlereagh*, terminates to the north-east, at *Strangford Lough*. I was told by some of the old Catholic descendants, or rather Aborigines, that the district is traditionally reported to have embraced all the Peninsula of Down county to the north, formed by Belfast and Strangford Loughs. This traditional account to me bears a great degree of probability, and almost convinces me of the reality of my conjecture on discovering the place, called to this day *Cromac*, near Belfast; but the poet, in the description of his actions to Malvina, ingeniously evades any allusion or similitudes by which we might trace his position, or rather the fields of his exploits, in favour of *Crothar*, the chieftain of that district.

As the Poem *Temora*, furnishes me with grounds for the few brief remarks I have made, at the commencement of this enquiry, so I am also indebted to it for grounds whereon to challenge another little error of the annotator. *Inishuana* is noted as a part of South Britain, an island, &c. This mistake of the annotator, if it is one, must have arisen from his recollection of Fingal having, in the preceding Poems, twice sailed from *Carmona's bay*, for that destination: hence, perhaps, the annotator thought that had *Inishuana* been in *Ireland*, the warrior might have gone thither by land. This *Inishuana*, or by some *Inishona*, *is in the north-west part of Ireland*, opposite to

Scotland, and noted, wherever Irishmen travel, for its excellent whiskey. I have yet to observe, that if this was the same place to which the poet alluded, the warriors of *Morven*, no doubt, found it necessary to go to it *by sea:* probably in consequence of the *unfordable* river *Bann* running across their way; or, perhaps, from a wish to have their shipping at hand in case of being obliged to retreat; or, perhaps, rather than leave their ships behind them in *Carmona's bay*, to be exposed to an enemy in their absence, who might have destroyed them, and consequently cut off their communication with *Morven*, they preferred, the voyage by water to *Inishuana.*

To give a greater and more rational degree of colouring to my cause of difference with the translator, I have yet to observe that the Poems discover in the clearest manner, that the expedition to *Inishuna* took place only a short time before Fingal passed over to *Ireland* to dethrone Cairbar, the son of Borbar-Duthal. Cathmor, brother of Cairbar -- the usurper * of the crown and country of Fingal's young friend *Cormac*, of the race of Connor—was aiding Conmor king of *Inishuna*, in his wars, at the time that Duth Carmor was defeated by Ossian in the valley of *Rathcol*—which is in the county of *Derry*, and only a few miles from the coast opposite to *Morven.* The policy of Cathmor

* The fact is, the case was *vice versa.* Cairbar, ancestor of the present noble family of O'Neill, was the legitimate owner of the Ulster crown, and Cormac, of the race of Fingal, was the usurper! and kept it on by foreign force. There are many scenes in the counties of Derry and Donegal, pointed out as those of Ossian's battles. One of the Earls of Donegal had a map of an Ossianic hill engraved, and on it was a bust copy of himself—which I am informed, was the greatest curiosity of the map. *C.*

aiding Conmore, was natural enough, for it was strengthening his brother's power—*Inishuna* being the next district or kingdom to Connor, which, according to Macpherson, Cairbar had usurped!—and only separated by the river Bann.

This must certainly press hard on the annotator, who, of course, I hold unblameable—he having noted the error from the oral reporters, with whom the confusion of geographical descriptions was more likely to arise than with Mr. Macpherson.

A few more corroboratory proofs are necessary, for here, as in a court of law, it may be essential to give the best evidence that can be adduced to bear out my case.

"The setting sun was yellow on *Dora*, grey evening "began to descend! *Temora's* woods shook with the "blasts of the inconstant wind!" This is doubtless a very valuable passage, and much my friend. Here Ossian tells us that he was at *Temora*, or rather that the Poem was composed at *Connor*; for *Connor* and its immediate vicinity supply the beautiful allusions he has portrayed, and immortalized. Here, I infer, he was at *Connor* with his royal kinsman, else how could he "see its woods shake in the blasts of the inconstant "wind? or observe the rays of the setting sun on "*Dora*?" which hill is about three miles from *Connor*; and I need scarcely add, that the description of the *setting* sun on *Dora*, is truly natural and picturesque! For the hill lies north and south—consequently the setting sun bears full against its western side!

"Who comes from Lubar's vale, from the folds of "the morning mist? The drops of heaven are on his "head; his steps are in the paths of the sad. It is

"Carril of other times! He comes from Tura's silent "cave!"

Than this passage, there is not one in the whole collection of Poems, that tends more to bear out my system, and confirm my discoveries. Ossian, we read in the same page, was on the hill of *Mora* above *Connor*, and saw the bard in *Lubar's* vale! I shall add no more on the subject, than that the relative situation of the *two bards* are so clear to my mind, that a person the least acquainted with the country might point out both places.

It will be recollected that there are two chains of hills, which run nearly parallel with Belfast Loch, and the capital *Connor*—Œmania or Temora. The one is the *Cave-hill*, and its chain—*Cromla*; the other is *Mora*—the *Sandy Braes*, and its fellows of that chain. The intermediate space is sometimes called the vale of *Lubar*—through which the *Six Mile Water* winds in beautiful wanderings—but more frequently the *Heath of Lena*. Ossian tells us, in the account of the battle between Oscar and Cairbar, in which the latter fell, "*he lay like a shattered rock, which Cromla* "*shakes from his craggy side!*" On this most important simile to the truth of my system, I have merely to observe, that from the north-east end of the Cave-hill—Cromla—near Belfast, the rocks seem jutting out, as if ready to fall! and many are the huge masses which the winds have *shaken* from its *craggy side*, to be seen at the foot of the hill! It is also worthy of remark, that the Cave-hill is the highest in that neighbourhood, and the only hill or mountain that has such a picturesque craggy side.

This allusion to "*the craggy side of Cromla*," is to

me one of the most gratifying sources of delight. Here, if ever man had rational grounds on which to build a thorough conviction that he was completely successful in discovering the most incontrovertible proofs of a system, it is the writer of these pages. The *Cromla* of the poet, is evidently the *Cave-hill*, of the moderns, which has no parallel in majesty and romantic beauty in the north of Ireland. Its commanding prospect over one of the richest vales and views in nature—its ancient and almost unapproachable caves cut out of the nearly perpendicular side of the mountain —and its awfully grand and truly picturesque "*craggy* "*side*," give this giant, among Irish hills, an air of sublime grandeur that is capable of producing not only the most pleasureable emotions, but also, of exciting the purest feelings of respect for, and adoration of, the wonderful and almighty *Author* of diversified nature—of which no portion can excel the scenery which one contemplates from "the *Hill of Cromla!*"

The admiration of this beautiful scenery by Ossian, was not more just than natural; for I hold it impossible for a poetical eye not to feed upon the beauties which are catered to its taste by Cromla. The first of British poets has made the *Cave-hill* the sun amidst the surrounding worlds whence his poetry derived its light, warmth, and many elegant similes. All the scenes of his battles—all the voyages which he made —all the beauties of his native Morven, and of the regal palace of *Selma*, were as nothing when compared with the ever fertile, ever supplying *Cromla! Cromla* was ever uppermost in his memory—*Cromla*, like the Mentor of Telemachus, was ever present to his imagination, when he wanted assistance; and, it was

the talisman that furnished him with the chastest allusions, and most correct and beautiful similes--refined and sublimated through the noble sentiments of his own amiable mind.

In short, Cromla is the first and greatest of Ossianic beauties!—and why?—Because it smiles in romantic grandeur over the richly cultivated vale of "the reedy "Lego," on whose green banks stood the hall of "the "generous Branno," the father of his lovely wife Everallin—the mother of his young and noble son Oscar. And after having remained, unknown, unsung, and unheeded, during the space of fourteen hundred years, it has happily fallen to my lot to tell the world an obvious truth, unknown to my predecessors in Irish and Celtic antiquities; namely, that the *Cromla* of Ossian is the *Cave-hill* of our times; and, that part of it is used by Lord Donegall for a deer park, about four miles from Belfast.—*Vide* the Engraving.

It now only remains for me to add, that having found each part of my discoveries consistent with the descriptions, when compared and proved by the poetry; and, indeed, more generally uniform than my most sanguine wishes could have hoped for, I feel the greatest confidence in submitting the result to an enlightened Public, conscious as I am, that, although such dark and dry enquiries are *not* of the most valuable description, yet I feel a hope that they will be considered gratifying.

Hence it remains only for me to add, or rather, to repeat, my former assertion, that Fingal's progress in Ireland appears to have been limited to the bounds of the map; in other words, he appears not to have penetrated twenty miles from the coast into the interior of

Ireland—at least his Poems say so! Hence the allegations of the historians Keating and O'Flaherty, respecting Fingal having been an Irishman, are wholly inconsistent with truth and reason! For we may safely assert, that had he been an Irishman, he would have chosen a more extensive field for his exploits than that portion of lovely *Inisfail*—Ireland—bounded by the map. But we find, invariably, that instead of taking advantage of his conquests in that country, or of the respect or terror which his redoubted name created in the minds of all the warriors and chieftains, where his fame was known, we find him represented as a virtuous, prudent, and humane warrior, and the active friend of the distressed! Peaceably inclined, he was only anxious to preserve the land of his young kinsman; and he appears to have been wholly careless of extending his conquests, even though his frequent victories—if we may credit his son Ossian—could have given him an easy supremacy over then, as now distracted Ireland!

Hence it is, that after his victories and treaties, we find him invariably return to *Morven*, adored by his friends, and esteemed by his *late* enemies: more pleased within himself at the idea of having performed his part faithfully as a friend, and gallantly as a warrior, than if he had ambitiously laid countries desolate, and deprived millions of their natural rights and inheritance.

To conclude,—if Fingal was an Irishman, his son Ossian, and his translator, have *more* than ingeniously evaded giving any hint by which he might be ascertained to have been born in Ireland.—And, on the contrary, have given the most convincing proofs that

he was a Caledonian, and that his frequent descents upon Ireland were solely occasioned by the wants of his kinsmen of the race of Connor, Kings of Ireland! Now, as there is every reason to believe that Mr. Macpherson *never was* in Ireland, nor any of the Highland peasants from whom he had the *oral originals* of the elegant Poems of Ossian; and, as the geographers of that excellent island are wholly silent on many, indeed *all*, of the places, which I have here attempted to bring to light, as sacred to the heroic actions of Fingal, and the never languid, never dying strains of his noble-minded son; so, I presume, it may be safely asserted, that the Poems of Ossian are the genuine effusions of the era of that father of Scottish and of sublime poetry; who, from a state of rude, though polished barbarism—if I may use the expression—poured forth a stream of Sensibility, dazzling by the brightness of bravery and enthusiasm of patriotism; that, had it come down to us by an explorer of Herculaneum, as the work of a Greek or Roman, instead of through the long-doubted hands of the inconsistent Macpherson—it would have invaded our partial and too fastidious hearts with the irresistible force of lightning, and with the electric ardor of every idea that conspires to animate, exalt, and at the same time, to astonish and chain the intellectual empire, as by magic, to all that is truly feeling, noble, and sublime—the common effects of a mighty name! Without the passport from the classic vine-covered hills of Italy, I know those on whom the Poems of Ossian have had the above ennobling effect, though they came from the rugged mountains of Caledonia.

APPENDIX.

THERE are several ancient castles in the county of Antrim, of which there are no records when they were built; but their appearance renders it beyond a doubt, that they are of the first stone and lime buildings erected in Ireland. They are the ruins of Connor Palace--the ancient *Temora*—Carrickfergus castle—*Tura*—Shanes Castle on the banks of Lochneagh—*Lake of Roes*—the seat of the O'Neills, for many centuries kings, or chieftains in Ulster; and the old building in *Carmona bay*, called the White Abbey—which tradition would make the first house in Ireland, and may have been the *Selma*, mentioned near *Tura*, from its beautiful situation.

The old round tower near the town of Antrim, is evidently of a remote date—perhaps of the eighth century. Carrickfergus Castle is traditionally reported to have been built by Fergus, the second king of Scotland, who, according to Fordun and others, went from Ireland to govern the Scots who had emigrated from Ireland to Scotland about the time of Alexander the Great, or three hundred years before Christ. But that must be a misrepresentation, for we have the authority of several Roman writers to counteract that tradition; who all agree in their account of the barbarous mode in which our forefathers lived. The Romans

found no stone and lime buildings in these countries; consequently, they were the *first* who introduced them. And there is every reason to imagine that the before-mentioned castles have been built between the first landing of the Romans and the time of Fingal — say 300 years! This will exactly correspond with the time Connor is *supposed* to have been called to govern Ireland, and will bear out the Irish historian, who says, "*Connor's castle was the first stone and lime* building in Ireland." The Romans had been in possession of South Britain and the South of Scotland nearly 150 years before Connor the grand-uncle of Fingal was considered King of Ireland; consequently there was sufficient time for the Aborigines to learn the art of building from the indefatigable Romans; hence is it not probable that *Connor*, on finding his right to the Crown of Ireland doubted, had recourse to the building discovered at *Connor*, whose walls appear more like those of a fortification than of a common dwelling?—add to this its central situation in the county, and vicinity to the coast.

The antiquary, on having read the foregoing pages, will agree with me, I presume, in the remark which naturally arises from a review of the whole—namely, that that tract of Antrim county, to which my observations have been directed, is apparently the same which the learned Archbishop Usher designated the *Route of Dalriada!*—whence report would colonise the neighbouring island of Scotland. Be that as it may, however, there is no part of Ireland, over which I have travelled, that contains so many rude vestiges of antiquity; nor one whose local situation is more likely to have received inhabitants from, or given them to, the Sister Island.—*Ne plus ultra!*

It is matter of regret that Irish history should be so fabulous even at a comparatively modern date. A developement of proofs, however, of the Irish being in some measure a flourishing country in possession of the arts and sciences, and the repository of learned men before Scotland and England, is annually taking place. Indeed I am fully disposed to side with Sir James Ware, Lord Lyttleton, and Dr. Whitaker, in opposition to Archbishop Usher, on the veracity of their statements and conjectures.

Irish history, or rather printed tradition, describes a celebrated king—by the style of Malachi of the gold collar. As his name is a scripture one, I infer that he must have lived since the days of St. Patrick—and that he wore a collar of gold I am not willing to doubt. A few years ago I had the pleasure of handling several of those rich ornaments of the early Irish, at the levee of that venerable and excellent man Sir Joseph Banks. It is scarcely necessary to add that they were dug out of Irish bogs, where they were no doubt deposited during the troubles of that hapless country, and forwarded to the President of the Royal Society by different noblemen who had purchased them from the peasantry who found them. Their massy construction proved that gold was no rarity in Ireland in the early ages, and they are in size fitted to the neck and body of the largest man. The workmanship is by no means of the rudest cast; though certainly wanting the finish of the artists of our day.

All these circumstances go far to partly affirm the traditionally recorded part of Irish history—and to give to what, without them, would—like the Poems of Ossian—be "airy nothing"—"a *local* habitation and a name!"

In consequence of the lamentable destruction of the family archives at Shane's Castle by fire, I am necessitated, in haste, to have recourse to the following *vague* and defective genealogy of the noble family of O'Neill, Kings of Ulster, which has been obligingly lent to me by Lord O'Neill, as given to his Lordship by Ulster, King at Arms—than which I could draw up one more correct myself.

"The O'Neills are descended from Heremon, third son of Milesius, who was the first Monarch of Ireland after the conquest thereof by the Phenician Scots, about thirteen hundred years before the Christian era. There were more Monarchs of Ireland of this than of all the other families—who reigned over Ireland—put together. In his time a colony known to the Irish by the name of Cuthrir, called Picts by the Britons and Romans, arrived in Ireland, and desired permission to settle there, which the natives refused, but Heremon sent with them a strong party of his troops to conquer the country then called Albin, afterwards Scotland, on condition that they should become tributaries to the Monarchs of Ireland; which, having done, Cathluan their leader, became the first of sixty-nine Kings who reigned in that country—then called Pictland, until they were totally *destroyed* and *subjugated* (here Sir William puts the cart before the horse, *destroys* them first, and *subjugates* them afterwards) by the Irish Scots of *Dalriada*—or Argyle. Heremon *died*, according to the Irish chronicles, *anno mundi* 2752, and from him descended most of the Irish Princes of Ulster and Connaught, and also of Leinster—the O'Neill being always the chief or leading family. The appellations of the chiefs of Ulster were various; viz. Kings

of Kinolowen, Tirowen—now Tyrone—Ullah, Ultah, &c. &c.

" Cormac, *Ulfhadda*, or long beard, was the 116th Monarch, and the wisest and best, who, till his time, had ruled Ireland. He enacted several good laws, and *wrote* a treatise on the duties of a King, for the instruction and guidance of his son Cairbre, *Liffechar*, afterwards Monarch of Ireland, which is still extant. He was a most magnificent Monarch, and had an attendance of 1100 individuals in his daily retinue in his great hall of Tarah,* which is said to have been 300 feet long, and 30 cubits high. These are the *Cormac* and *Cairbar* about whom the enquiry is made. He was killed at the battle of Gowra, A. D. 284."

So much for Ulster, King at Arms. Mr. Campbell had asked Lord O'Neill to favour him with an answer whether the Irish genealogists traced any of the above names in his Lordship's pedigree? Hence the noble Earl obligingly applied to Sir William Bethan, who drew up the above statement—all the family and bardic records having been destroyed with the princely seat of Shane's castle, a few years ago.

I have neither time nor inclination at present to enter upon this subject. The *medium*, like that of other legends, is doubtless *true*, and bears out the inferences I had elicited from the Text of Ossian, that the *Cormac* and *Cairbar*, above-mentioned, were progenitors of the noble family of O'Neill, then the real Kings of Ireland, who, during the minority of one of them, had been dispossessed by the son of Conor, the grand-uncle of Fingal, King of Morven—Argylleshire.—

* *Quere* Teamrah? *C.*

Hence the frequent descents of Fingal and Ossian on Ireland to support the claims—unjust ones—of their kinsman, against the legitimate Monarch of the Milesian race, from whom the O'Neills are lineally descended. This family still retains a portion of their progenitors' kingdom or territory in Ireland, which is described in the following affecting lamentation of the family bard of O'Neill, Flatha, in the 16th century, when O'Neill was robbed of his lands on every side by English and Scottish adventurers.

" Oh, wretched condition of our dear countrymen !
" the remains of a once happy people, wallowing in
" blood, and drenched in slaughter. Vain are your
" struggles for liberty, for ye are the hapless crew of a
" vessel long tempest tost, and finally cast away !
" What ! are we not wrecked on our own coast ? Are
" we not the prisoners of the Saxon race ? Is not our
" sentence past ? Is not our execution fore-doomed ?
" How are we fallen from the ancient glories of our
" native land ! Our power is degraded into weakness,
" or turned against ourselves ! our beauty into defor-
" mity—our freedom into slavery ! Our songs of
" triumph into doleful elegies ! Our forefathers would
" not know—or if they knew they would disclaim their
" sons. Turn not thine eyes, immortal Ollam, on thy
" recreant sons ! Neill, of the Nine Hostages, look
" not down upon us, lest thou blush for thy captive
" *Gælians !* Con, of the Hundred Battles, sleep in
" thy grass grown tomb, and upbraid not our defeats
" with thy victories ! Shroud us, oh Night, in thy
" dunnest cloud, that the sun may not shed reproach-
" ful rays on our ignominy ! But whence this fatal
" transformation ? From your tame submission to

"tyrant strangers—from your mean subservience to "the Saxon laws! Since your departure from the "equity of the Brehons, clouds of evils have burst "upon you! Deluges of misery have overwhelmed "you! The purposes of Heaven are changed! Your "sporting lawns are paled in! Your sun-gilt hills are "deformed with ramparts, and frightful with towers! "The laws of nature are violated! Our country, 'once the scene of virtue and honour, is metamor-"phosed into another Saxony! We are slaves, and "no longer know our own country—and our country "disowns us!—Both are alike distorted! We see but "two monsters! The Saxon denizen—the Irish alien! "Oh, ye besieged of Troy, without a Hector to de-"fend you—ye Israelites without a Moses to conduct "you—How are ye fallen!"

I have to observe, that I should have given an engraving of Shanes Castle, which became the principal residence of the oppressed Princes O'Neill, in the 11th century, but I have been opposed. The translator of Ossian, who has been much indebted, in his Gallic edition of Ossian, to Irish poems, which he wished to conceal, has called it "*Atha*," being more poetical, in his opinion, than "*Aidha*." This fact, and the withholding the *true* account of the *usurpation* of the kingdom, of the *infant*, O'Neill, by Connor of Morven, cannot be too *severely* blamed! Fixing the title of *usurper* on the *rightful* Monarch, and giving the latter title to the *usurper*, was unworthy of a man of genius. The unfortunate O'Neills had from their progenitor, Heremon, the province of Ulster—which, from the invasion of the Belgæ, till the usurpation of the Lordship of Ireland, by King John, they nobly retained by force

of arms; and it was not until the influx of English and Scottish adventurers, who lost no opportunity which their wants and avarice could urge, of stirring up internal dissensions in Ireland, that the princely power of the O'Neills became weakened, and their vassals estranged. Hence every needy adventurer by crimes, tyrannies, and oppressions, from time to time, obtained charters from a foreign crown, whose base and ignoble minions, on all occasions, took care to grossly aggravate the conscientious, natural, and just resistance or retaliation of O'Neill, into acts of rebellion, in their opinion; which only served to call forth new forfeitures and oppressions; until, at last, this once opulent and princely house, which had governed the north of Ireland—

"Through the long vista of two thousand years,"

was within *one* single life of being cut off from the face of the earth.

It is incumbent upon me to add one more observation before I conclude—namely, that the natural, though rather singular *mound*, called Tara, in the county of Meath, is generally considered by Irish antiquaries—who have implicitly followed O'Flaherty, and one another—as the scite of the regal palace of the O'Neills; whilst it is an obvious truth that *Temora*, or *Teamrah*, and now called *Connor*, in Antrim county, was the principal seat and centre of the principality, or kingdom of these descendants of Heremonian Kings! As Monarchs of Ulster, they sometimes resided at, or near the castle of the present Earls of Antrim.—M'Donnell, whose ancestor, from the Isles, violated the rights of hospitality, murdered his generous host, M'Quillenan, who was descended from the

O'Neills; and, by a forced marriage with his daughter, possessed himself of her estates.

At other times, when the invasions of the Danes had become less frequent, the Ulster Princes resided occasionally on the southern banks of Lough Neagh, in a Palace, whose vicinity is called to this day O'Neill-land. During the last seven hundred years, however, this illustrious family has almost constantly resided at Shane's Castle—the *Aidha Riogh Carric*—or Palace of the Kings of Lough Neagh. The soil being richer, and hunting and fishing commencing at the very walls of the Palace, rendered this the most desirable and delightful spot in their kingdom. From this beautiful scenery each generation had to sally forth, to resist the ejectments, encroachments, and violations of their lands, subjects, and property; until their race became almost extinct, and their kingdom reduced to a modern sized estate.

I repeat that *Temorah*, Teamrah, Œmania, and Connor, are each and all the *same* place to which the Irish priests of the 13th and 14th centuries alluded, when, in their rhapsodies, they spoke or wrote of *Tara!*—for it was Priests that the great antiquaries of the 16th and 17th centuries had for their leaders! And I feel it incumbent upon me to say, that *had* they given the world the pure traditions and legends of Ireland, as given to them by the Shannahs, without interpolating their own monkish notions of morality, tales of fancy, Genii, and Giants, the early history of Ireland, and of the princely families of that kingdom would not now have been so enveloped in the mist of fable, and ridiculed by the learned world as it is; and I regret to say, in many places doubted, where it

should be believed. After all that has been said to the contrary, the early poets are the best *historians* of a people who, from a state of barbarism, gradually become civilized.

The Map represents the ancient kingdom of the O'Neills, as when it was usurped and held by Connor, the Caledonian uncle of Fingal, chief of Morven. The castle of Carick-fergus—or Fergus Castle—is so old that there are no records to tell us when it was built. Tradition supplies the omission, and says that it was built by order of Fergus, King of the Irish Scots, who emigrated to Morven and the Isles—whose name it has borne, as it appears by history, during the last seven hundred years. Cannon were planted round its walls in the time of Elizabeth. *Cromla*—or the *Cave-hill*—near Belfast, is a hasty sketch drawn by me, from the shore—from the place where I stood to its summit may be about two miles. The hills of *Carmona* of Ossian, and the road from Belfast to Connor—Temora—*via* the Heath of Lena, appear to the right of Cromla. Lord Donegal's deer park is on the face of the mountain. Shane's Castle is most delightfully situate on the banks of Lough Neagh—the Lake of Roes. It was the regularly fortified palace of an ancient chieftain, but as the troubles of Ireland diminished with the establishment of the Protestant government, so the warlike appearance of the building became less and less, until the whole palace of this ancient and princely family assumed its present appearance. I repeat a legend from page 25 of the Data, that throws some light upon the first assumption of power in Ulster by the grand uncle of Fingal. The tradition states that the prince or king of Ulster, of the family of O'Neill, being hard pressed by the *Belgæ*, which had *then* lately settled in Connaught, invited the chief of Morven, of the race of Fergus, to send some troops to his assistance against the Belgæ! This was amicably complied with by the king of Morven, but previous to the arrival of his troops in Ireland, a battle had taken place between O'Neill and the Belgæ, in which that prince and all his kinsmen were killed, leaving only one son, then an infant. The Pictland Scots attacked the fatigued Belgæ and completely defeated them, with great slaughter. The young prince, O'Neill, being an infant, Connor, from this victory, sirnamed Connor the Great, assumed the protectorship of the young O'Neill, and shortly after died, leaving a son named Artha, who entirely, and against the expressed will of his father, broke his faith, dispossessed the young O'Neill, and was proclaimed king by his Scots army.—Hence the origin of the Caledonian kingdom in Ulster, and the frequent battles of Fingal in that province. The son of this usurper was stabbed in the palace at Temora (Connor), by the rightful prince O'Neill, who was afterwards killed in battle by Oscar; but his offspring are still Lords in Ulster. H. CAMPBELL.

OSSIAN'S POEMS.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

TO THE BINDER.

The MAP precedes the Title of the First Volume.

The Print of TURA, or CARRICKFERGUS, to face the Title of the First Volume.

The Print of SHANE'S CASTLE, to face page 84 of the *Data*, in the First Volume.

And the Print or View of CROMLA to face the Title of the Second Volume.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK I.

Cuthullin (general of the Irish tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) sitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a castle of Ulster, Carrickfergus, (the other chiefs having gone on a hunting party to Cromla a neighbouring hill,) is informed of the landing of Swaran, king of Lochlin, by Moran, the son of Fithil, one of his scouts. He convenes the chief; a council is held, and disputes run high about giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Togorma,* and an intimate friend of Cuthullin, was for retreating, till Fingal, king of those Caledonians who inhabited the north-west coast of Scotland, whose aid had been previously solicited, should arrive; but Calmar, the son of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connaught, was for engaging the enemy immediately. Cuthullin, of himself willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar. Marching towards the enemy, he missed three of his bravest heroes, Fergus, Duchomar, and Cathba. Fergus arriving, tells Cuthullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting episode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac. The army of Cuthullin is descried at a distance by Swaran, who sent the son of Arno to observe the motions of the enemy, while he himself ranged his forces in order of battle. The son of Arno returning to Swaran, describes to him Cuthullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage, but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuthullin, according to the hospitality of the times, sends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feast, by his bard Carril, the son of Kinfena. Swaran refuses to come. Carril relates to Cuthullin the story of Grudar and Brassolis. A party, by Connal's advice, is sent to observe the enemy; which closes the action of the first day. *M.* and *C.*

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* The translator has said—and I have disputed the saying—that Culgorma is not of Celtic origin; but here he admits that Togorma is. The fact is, the expedition to Inisthona, an island of Scandinavia, is doubtless meant for one to Inishona, in the north-west part of Ireland! Vide the Geog. Argument. C.

FINGAL

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK I.

CUTHULLIN* sat by Tura's wall: by the tree of the rustling sound. His spear leaned against a rock. His shield lay on grass, by his side. Amid his

* Cuthullin, the son of Semo and grandson to Caithbat, a druid celebrated in tradition for his wisdom and valour. Cuthullin when very young married Bragela the daughter of Sorglan, and passing over into Ireland, lived some time with Connal, grandson by a daughter to Congal the petty king of Ulster. His wisdom and valour in a short time gained him such reputation, that in the minority of Cormac, the supreme king of Ireland, he was chosen guardian to the young king, and sole manager of the war against Swaran, king of Lochlin. After a series of great actions he was killed in battle somewhere in Connaught,* in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He was so remarkable for his strength, that to describe a strong man it has passed into a proverb, "He has the strength of Cuthullin." They shew the remains of his palace at Dunscaich, in the Isle of Skye; and a stone to which he bound his dog Luath, goes still by his name. *M.*—* This is a great error of the translator. He was killed on the banks of the Legon, in battle with Torlath, a chief of Connaught—vide death of Cuthullin. *C.*

thoughts of mighty Carbar,* a hero slain by the chief in war; the scout† of ocean comes, Moran‡ the son of Fithil!

"Arise," says the youth, "Cuthullin, arise. I see the ships of the north! Many, chief of men, are the foe. Many the heroes of the sea-born Swaran! "Moran!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "thou ever tremblest, son of Fithil! Thy fears have increased the foe. It is Fingal, king|| of deserts, with aid to green Erin of streams." "I beheld their chief," says Moran, "tall as a glittering rock. His spear is a blasted pine. His shield the rising moon!

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* Cairbar or Cairbre, signifies *a strong man.*

† Cuthullin having previous intelligence of the invasion intended by Swaran, sent scouts all over the coast of Ullin or Ulster, to give early notice of the first appearance of the enemy, at the same time that he sent Munan, the son of Stirmal, to implore the assistance of Fingal. He himself collected the flower of the Irish youth to Tura, (Carrickfergus) a castle on the coast, to stop the progress of the enemy till Fingal should arrive from Scotland. We may conclude from Cuthullin's applying so early for foreign aid, that the Irish were not then so numerous as they have since been; which is a great presumption against the high antiquities of that people. We have the testimony of Tacitus, that one legion only was thought sufficient, in the time of Agricola, to reduce the whole island under the Roman yoke; which would not probably have been the case had the island been inhabited for any number of centuries before. *M.*—But the Romans were vain and never attempted it. *C.*

‡ Moran signifies *many;* and Fithil, or rather Fili, *an inferior bard.*

|| Fingal the son of Comhal, and Morna the daughter of Thaddu. His grandfather was Trathal, and great grandfather Trenmor, both of whom are often mentioned in the poem.

He sat on the shore! like a cloud of mist on the silent hill! Many, chief of heroes! I said, many are our hands of war. Well art thou named, the Mighty Man: but many mighty men are seen from Tura's windy walls."

"He spoke, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes stand not in my presence: they fall to earth from my hand. Who can meet Swaran in fight? Who but Fingal, king of Selma of storms? Once we wrestled on Malmor;* our heels overturned the woods. Rocks fell from their place; rivulets, changing their course, fled murmuring from our side. Three days we renewed the strife; heroes stood at a distance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal says, that the king of the ocean fell! but Swaran says, he stood! Let dark Cuthullin yield to him, that is strong as the storms of his land!"

"No!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "I never yield to mortal man! Dark Cuthullin shall be great or dead! Go, son of Fithil, take my spear. Strike the sounding shield of Semo.† It hangs at Tura's rustling gate. The sound of peace is not its voice! My heroes shall hear and obey." He went. He struck the bossy shield. The hills, the rocks reply. The sound spreads along the wood: deer start by

* Meal-mór, *a great hill.*

† Cabait, or rather Cathbait, grandfather to the hero, was so remarkable for his valour, that his shield was made use of to alarm his posterity to the battles of the family. We find Fingal making the same use of his own shield in the fourth book A horn was the most common instrument to call the army together.

the lake of roes. Curach* leaps from the sounding rock; and Connal of the bloody spear! Crugal's† breast of snow beats high. The son of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the shield of war, said Ronnor! the spear of Cuthullin, said Lugar! son of the sea put on thy arms! Calmar, lift thy sounding steel! Puno! dreadful hero, arise! Cairbar, from thy red tree of Cromla! Bend thy knee, O Eth! descend from the streams of Lena. Ca-tol, stretch thy side as thou movest along the whistling heath of Mora: thy side that is white as the foam of the troubled sea, when the dark winds pour it on rocky Cuthon.‡

Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds! Their souls are kindled at the battles of old; at the actions of other times. Their eyes are flames of fire. They roll in search of the foes of the land. Their mighty hands are on their swords. Lightning pours from their sides of steel. They come like streams from the mountains; each rushes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle, in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven. The sounds of crashing arms ascend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequal bursts the song of battle. Rocky Cromla‖ echoes round. On Lena's dusky

* Cu-raoch signifies *the madness of battle.*

† Cruth-geal, *fair-complexioned.*

‡ Cu-thón, *the mournful sound of waves.*

This page alone is sufficient to prove the authenticity of Ossian when assisted by my geographical illustrations. C.

‖ Crom-leach signifies a place of worship among the Druids.

heath they stand, like mist that shades the hills of autumn: when broken and dark it settles high, and lifts its head to heaven!

"Hail," said Cuthullin, "sons of the narrow vales! hail, hunters of the deer! Another sport is drawing near: It is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coast! Or shall we fight, ye sons of war! or yield green Erin† to Lochlin! O Connal,‡ speak, thou first of men! thou breaker of the shields! thou hast often fought with Lochlin: wilt thou lift thy father's spear?"

"Cuthullin!" calm the chief replied, "the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle; to mix with the blood of thousands. But though my hand is bent on fight, my heart is for the peace of Erin.§ Behold, thou first in Cormac's war, the sable fleet of Swaran. His masts are many on our

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it is here the proper name of a hill on the coast of Ullin or Ulster. *M.*—Now the Cave Hill near Belfast. *C.*

* Ireland, so called from a colony that settled there called Falans. Innis-fail, the island of the Fa-il or Falans. *M.*—When did the colony settle? *C.*

† Connal, the friend of Cuthullin, was the son of Caith-bait, prince of the Tongorma, or the *island of blue waves*, probably one of the Hebrides. His mother was Fioncoma, the daughter of Congal. He had a son by Foba of Conacharnessar, who was afterwards petty king of Ulster. For his services in the war against Swaran he had lands conferred on him, which, from his name, were called Tir-chonnuil or Tir-connel, *i. e.* the land of Connal.

‡ Erin, a name of Ireland; from *ear* or *iar* West, and *in* an island. This name was not always confined to Ireland, for there is the highest probability that the *Ierne* of the ancients was Britain to the north of the Forth. For Ierne is said to be

coast, like reeds in the lake of Legó.* His ships are forests clothed with mist, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace! Fingal would shun his arm the first of mortal men! Fingal, who scatters the mighty, as stormy winds the heath; when streams roar through echoing Cona: and night settles with all her clouds on the hill!

"Fly, thou man of peace," said Calmar.† "Fly," said the son of Matha; "go, Connal, to thy silent hills, where the spear never brightens in war! Pursue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: stop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena.‡ But, blue-eyed son of Semo, Cuthullin, ruler of the field, scatter thou the sons of Lochlin!§ roar through the ranks of their pride. Let no vessel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore.|| Rise, ye dark winds of Erin rise! roar, whirlwind of Lara of hinds! Amid the tempest let me die, torn, in a cloud, by angry ghosts of men; amid the tempest let Calmar die, if ever chase was sport to him, so much as the battle of shields!"

"Calmar!" Connal slow replied, "I never fled, young son of Matha! I was swift with my friends

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to the north of Britain, which could not be meant of Ireland. Strabo, l. 2. & 4. Casaub. l. 1.

* I was gratified on finding the reeds of the lake of "Lego" as plenty and conspicuous in the nineteenth as they were to Ossian in the fifth century. *C.*

† Calm-er, *a strong man.*

‡ Cromla is the highest mountain of the ridge of Lena. *C.*

§ The Galic name of Scandinavia in general.

|| The Orkney Islands.

in fight; but small is the fame of Connal! The battle was won in my presence; the valiant overcame! But, son of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal shall arrive on our coast. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the sword and spear. My joy shall be in the midst of thousands; my soul shall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

"To me," Cuthullin replies, "pleasant is the noise of arms! pleasant as the thunder of heaven, before the shower of spring! But gather all the shining tribes, that I may view the sons of war. Let them pass along the heath, bright as the sunshine before a storm; when the west wind collects the clouds, and Morven echoes over all her oaks! But where are my friends in battle? The supporters of my arm in danger? Were art thou, white-bosomed Câthbar? Where is that cloud in war, Duchômar?* Hast thou left me, O Fergus!† in the day of the storm? Fergus, first in our joy at the feast! son of Rossa! arm of death! comest thou like a roe from Malmor? Like a hart from thy echoing hills? Hail, thou son of Rossa! what shades the soul of war?"

"Four stones,"‡ replied the chief, "rise on the

* Dubhchomar, *a black well-made man.*

† Fear-guth, *the man of the word;* or a commander of an army.

‡ This passage alludes to the manner of burial among the ancient Scots. They opened a grave six or eight feet deep: the bottom was lined with fine clay; and on this they laid the body of the deceased, and, if a warrior, his sword, and the

grave of Câthba. These hands have laid in earth Duchômar, that cloud in war! Câthba, son of Torman! thou wert a sunbeam in Erin. And thou, O valiant Duchômar! a mist of the marshy Lano;* when it moves on the plains of autumn, bearing the death of thousands along. Morna! fairest of maids! calm is thy sleep in the cave of the rock! Thou hast fallen in darkness, like a star, that shoots across the desert; when the traveller is alone, and mourns the transient beam!"

"Say," said Semo's blue-eyed son, "say how fell the chiefs of Erin? Fell they by the sons of Lochlin, striving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the strong in arms to the dark and narrow house?"

"Câthba," replied the hero, "fell by the sword of Duchômar at the oak of the noisy streams. Duchômar came to Tura's cave; he spoke to the lovely Morna. Morna,† fairest among women, lovely daughter of strong-armed Cormac! Why in the circle of stones? in the cave of the rock alone? The stream murmurs along. The old tree groans in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee; dark are the clouds of the sky! But thou art snow on

heads of twelve arrows by his side. Above they laid another stratum of clay, in which they placed the horn of a deer, the symbol of hunting The whole was covered with a fine mold, and four stones placed on end to mark the extent of the grave. These are the four stones alluded to here.

* *Lano* has been confounded with *Lego.* Lano appears to have been a lake of Norway which sent forth pestilential vapours. Lego is in Ulster. Vide the map. *C.*

† Muirne, or Morna, *a woman beloved by all.*

the heath; thy hair is the mist of Cromla; when it curls on the hill; when it shines to the beam of the west! Thy breasts are two smooth rocks seen from Branno of streams. Thy arms, like two white pillars, in the halls of the great Fingal."*

"From whence," the fair-haired maid replied, "from whence, Duchômar, most gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible! Red are thy rolling eyes! Does Swaran appear on the sea? What of the foe, Duchômar?" "From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I slain with my bended yew. Three with my long-bounding dogs of the chase. Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my soul! I have slain one stately deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind." "Duchômar!" calm the maid replied, "I love thee not, thou gloomy man! hard is thy heart of rock; dark is thy terrible brow. But Câthba, young son of Torman,† thou art the love of Morna. Thou art a sun-beam, in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Câthba!"

"Long shall Morna wait," Duchômar said, "long shall Morna wait for Câthba! Behold this sword unsheathed! Here wanders the blood of Câthba. Long shall Morna wait. He fell by the stream of

* "Pillars in the Hall of Fingal," though a beautiful simile, is bringing the era of Ossian down to that of Machpherson. C.

† Torman, *thunder*. This is the true origin of the Jupiter Taramis of the ancients.

Branno! On Croma I will raise his tomb, daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Turn on Duchômar thine eyes; his arm is strong as a storm." "Is the son of Torman fallen?" said the wildly-bursting voice of the maid. "Is he fallen on his echoing hills, the youth with the breast of snow? The first in the chase of hinds? The foe of the strangers of ocean? Thou art dark* to me, Duchômar, cruel is thine arm to Morna! Give me that sword, my foe! I love the wandering blood of Câthba!"

He gave the sword to her tears. She pierced his manly breast! He fell, like the bank of a mountain-stream, and stretching forth his hand, he spoke. "Daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Thou hast slain me in youth! The sword is cold in my breast: Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina† the maid. Duchômar was the dream of her night! She will raise my tomb; the hunter shall raise my fame. But draw the sword from my breast. Morna, the steel is cold!" She came, in all her tears she came; she drew the sword from his breast. He pierced her white side! He spread her fair locks on the ground! Her bursting blood sounds from her side: her white arm is stained with red. Rolling in death she lay. The cave re-echoed to her sighs.

"Peace," said Cuthullin, "to the souls of the heroes! their deeds were great in fight. Let them ride around‡ me on clouds. Let them shew their

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* She alludes to his name, *the dark man.*

† Moina, *soft in temper and person.*

‡ It was the opinion then, as indeed it is to this day, of some of the Highlanders, that the soul of the deceased hovered round

features of war. My soul shall then be firm in danger; mine arm like the thunder of heaven! But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna! near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; when the din of arms is past. Gather the strength of the tribes! Move to the wars of Erin! Attend the car of my battles! Rejoice in the noise of my course! Place three spears by my side: follow the bounding of my steeds! That my soul may be strong in my friends, when battle darkens round the beams of my steel!"

As rushes a stream of foam from the dark shady deep of Cromla; when the thunder is travelling above, and dark-brown night sits on half the hill. Through the breaches of the tempest look forth the dim faces of ghosts. So fierce, so vast, so terrible rushed on the sons of Erin. The chief, like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows pursue, poured valour forth as a stream, rolling his might along the shore. The sons of Lochlin heard the noise, as the sound of a winter-storm. Swaran struck his bossy shield: he called the son of Arno, "What murmur rolls along the hill, like the gathered flies of the eve? The sons of Erin descend, or rustling winds roar in the distant wood! Such is the noise of Gormal, before the white tops of my waves arise. O son of Arno ascend the hill; view the dark face of the heath!"

He went. He trembling, swift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high against his side. His words were faultering, broken, slow.

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their living friends; and sometimes appeared to them when they were about to enter on any great undertaking.

"Arise, son of ocean, arise chief of the dark-brown shields! I see the dark, the mountain-stream of battle! The deep-moving strength of the sons of Erin! The car, the car of war comes on, like the flame of death! the rapid car of Cuthullin, the noble son of Semo! It bends behind like a wave near a rock; like the sun-streaked mist of the heath. Its sides are embossed with stones, and sparkle like the sea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is its beam; its seat of the smoothest bone. The sides are replenished with spears; the bottom is the footstool of heroes! Before the right side of the car is seen the snorting horse! The high maned, broad-breasted, proud, wide-leaping, strong steed of the hill. Loud and resounding is his hoof; the spreading of his mane above is like a stream of smoke on a ridge of rocks. Bright are the sides of the steed! his name is Sulin-Sifadda!"

"Before the left side of the car is seen the snorting horse! The thin-maned, high-headed, strong-hoofed, fleet, bounding son of the hill: his name is Dusronnal, among the stormy sons of the sword! A thousand thongs bind the car on high. Hard polished bits shine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs, bright studded with gems, bend on the stately necks of the steeds. The steeds that like wreaths of mist fly over the streamy vales! The wildness of deer is in their course, the strength of eagles descending on their prey. Their noise is like the blast of winter, on the sides of the snow-headed Gormal.

Within the car is seen the chief; the strong-armed son of the sword. The hero's name is Cuthul-

lin, son of Semo, king of shells. His red cheek is like my polished yew. The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the spear. Fly, king of ocean, fly! He comes, like a storm, along the streamy vale!"

"When did I fly?" replied the king. "When fled Swaran from the battle of spears? When did I shrink from danger, chief of the little soul? I met the storm of Gormal, when the foam of my waves beat high. I met the storm of the clouds; shall Swaran fly from a hero? Were Fingal himself before me, my soul should not darken with fear. Arise to battle, my thousands! pour round me like the echoing main. Gather round the bright steel of your king; strong as the rocks of my land; that meet the storm with joy, and stretch their dark pines to the wind!"

Like autumn's dark storms, pouring from two echoing hills, towards each other approached the heroes. Like two deep streams from high rocks meeting, mixing, roaring on the plain; loud, rough and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man; steel, clanging, sounds on steel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood bursts and smokes around. Strings murmur on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night. As the noise of the troubled ocean, when roll the waves on high. As the last peal of thunder in heaven, such is the din of war! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give

the fight to song; feeble was the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times! For many were the deaths of heroes; wide poured the blood of the brave!

Mourn, ye sons of song, mourn the death of the noble Sithâllin.* Let the sighs of Fiŏna arise, on the lone plains of her lovely Ardan. They fell, like two hinds of the desert, by the hands of the mighty Swaran; when, in the midst of thousands, he roared; like the shrill spirit of a storm. He sits dim, on the clouds of the north, and enjoys the death of the mariner. Nor slept thy hand by thy side, chief of the isle of mist!† many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuthullin, thou son of Semo! His sword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the sons of the vale; when the people are blasted and fall, and all the hills are burning around. Dufronnal‡ snorted over the bodies of heroes. Sisadda‖ bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them, as groves overturned in the desert of Cromla, when the blast has past the heath, laden with the spirits of night!

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Inistore!§ Bend thy fair head over the waves,

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* Sithallin signifies *a handsome man*; Fiöna, *a fair maid*; and Ardan, *pride*.

† The Isle of Sky; not improperly called the *isle of mist*, as its high hills, which catch the clouds from the western ocean, occasions almost continual rains.

‡ One of Cuthullin's horses. Dubhstron gheal.

‖ Sith-fadda, *i. e. a long stride*.

§ *The maid of Inistore* was the daughter of Gorlo, king of Inistore, or Orkney islands. Trenar was brother to the king

thou lovelier than the ghosts of the hills, when it moves, in a sun-beam, at noon, over the silence of Morven! He is fallen! thy youth is low! pale beneath the sword of Cuthullin! No more shall valour raise thy love to match the blood of kings. Trenar, graceful Trenar died, O maid of Inistore! His grey dogs are howling at home! they see his passing ghost. His bow is in the hall unstrung. No sound is in the hill of his hinds!

As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sounds of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that rise, by turns, on the red son of the furnace. Who are these on Lena's heath, these so gloomy and dark? Who are these like two clouds, and their swords like lightning above them? The little hills are troubled around; the rocks tremble with all their moss. Who is it but Ocean's son and the car-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they see

of Iniscon, supposed to be one of the islands of Shetland. The Orkneys and Shetland were at that time subject to the king of Lochlin. We find that the dogs of Trenar are sensible at home of the death of their master, the very instant he is killed. It was the opinion of the times, that the souls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, and the scenes they frequented the most happy times of their life. It was thought too that dogs and horses saw the ghosts of the deceased.

them dim on the heath. But night conceals the chiefs in clouds, and ends the dreadful fight!

It was on Cromla' shaggy side that Dorglas had placed the deer;* the early fortune of the chase, before the heroes left the hill. A hundred youths collect the heath; ten warriors wake the fire; three hundred chuse the polish'd stones. The feast is smoking wide! Cuthullin, chief of Erin's war, resumed his mighty soul. He stood upon his beamy spear, and spoke to the son of songs; to Carril of other times, the grey-haired son of Kinfena.† "Is this feast spread for me alone and the king of Lochlin on Erin's shore; far from the deer of his hills, and sounding halls of his feasts? Rise, Carril of other times; carry my words to Swaran. Tell him from the roaring of waters, that Cuthullin gives his

* The ancient manner of preparing feasts after hunting, is handed down by tradition. A pit lined with smooth stones was made; and near it stood a heap of smooth flat stones of the flint kind. The stones, as well as the pit, were properly heated with heath. Then they laid some venison in the bottom, and a stratum of the stones above it; and thus they did alternately till the pit was full. The whole was covered over with heath to confine the steam. Whether this is probable I cannot say; but some pits are shewn, which the vulgar say, were used in that manner. *M.*--To prove the beauty of this remark—the shaggy sides of Cromla—it is almost necessary to visit Cromla, and view it. Thousands visit the scenes of the Roman Bard, when half of the money they spend on their journey would confer comforts upon the starving peasants of Ireland, where the scenes of Fingal's exploits could not be but agreeable to the classic or feeling mind. *C.*

† Cean-feana, *i.e. the head of the people.*

feast. Here let him listen to the sound of my groves, amidst the clouds of night. For cold and bleak the blustering winds rush over the foams of his seas. Here let him praise the trembling harp, and hear the songs of heroes!"

Old Carril went, with softest voice. He called the king of dark-brown shields! "Rise from the skins of thy chase, rise, Swaran, king of groves! Cuthullin gives the joy of shells. Partake the feast of Erin's blue-eyed chief!" He answered like the sullen sound of Cromla before a storm. "Though all thy daughters, Inis-fail! should stretch their arms of snow; should raise the heavings of their breasts, and softly roll their eyes of love; yet, fixed as Lochlin's thousand rocks, here Swaran should remain; till morn, with the young beams of the east, shall light me to the death of Cuthullin. Pleasant to my ear is Lochlin's wind! It rushes over my seas! It speaks aloft in all my shrouds, and brings my green forests to my mind: The green forests of Gormal, which often echoed to my winds, when my spear was red in the chase of the boar. Let dark Cuthullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac; or Erin's torrents shall shew from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride!"

"Sad is the sound of Swaran's voice," said Carril of other times! "Sad to himself alone," said the blue-eyed son of Semo. "But, Carril, raise the voice on high; tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in song; and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love, have moved on Inis-fail: And lovely are the songs

of woe that are heard in Albion's rocks; when the noise of the chase is past, and the streams of Cona answer to the voice of Ossian."*

"In other days,"† Carril replies, "came the sons of Ocean to Erin! a thousand vessels bounded on waves to Ullin's lovely plains. The sons of Inis-fail arose, to meet the race of dark-brown shields. Cairbar, first of men was there, and Grudar, stately youth! Long had they strove for the spotted bull, that lowed on Golbun's‡ echoing heath. Each claimed him as his own. Death was often at the point of their steel! Side by side the heroes fought; the strangers of Ocean fled. Whose name was fairer on the hill, than the name of Cairbar and Grudar! But ah! why ever lowed the bull, on Golbun's echoing heath. They saw him leaping like snow. The wrath of the chiefs returned!"

"On Lubar's§ grassy banks they fought; Grudar fell in his blood. Fierce Cairbar came to the vale,

* The Cona here mentioned is that small river that runs through Glenco, in Argyleshire. One of the hills which environ that romantic valley is still called Scornafena, or the hill of Fingal's people.

† This episode is introduced with propriety. Calmar and Connal, two of the Irish heroes, had disputed warmly before the battle about engaging the enemy. Carril endeavours to reconcile them with the story of Cairbar and Grudar; who, though enemies before, fought *side by side* in the war. The poet obtained his aim, for we find Calmar and Connal perfectly reconciled in the third book.

‡ Golb-bhean, as well as Cromleach, signifies *a crooked hill.*

§ Lubar, a river in Ulster. *Labhar*, loud, noisy. Now called the Six-mile waters, near Antrim, Templepatrick, and Doagh. *C.*

where Brassolis,* fairest of his sisters, all alone, raised the song of grief. She sung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her secret soul! She mourned him in the field of blood; but still she hoped for his return. Her white bosom is seen from her robe, as the moon from the clouds of night, when its edge heaves white on the view, from the darkness which covers its orb. Her voice was softer than the harp to raise the song of grief. Her soul was fixed on Grudar. The secret look of her eye was his. "When shalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war?"

"Take, Brassolis," Cairbar came and said, "take, Brassolis, this shield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe! Her soft heart beat against her side. Distracted, pale, she flew. She found her youth in all his blood; she died on Cromla's heath.† Here rests their dust, Cuthullin! these lonely yews sprung from their tombs, and shade them from the storm. Fair was Brassolis on the plain! Stately was Grudar on the hill! The bard shall preserve their names, and send them down to future times!"

Pleasant is thy voice, O Carril," said the blue-eyed chief of Erin. "Pleasant are the words of other times! they are like the calm shower of spring; when the sun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O strike the harp in praise of

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* Brassolis signifies *a woman with a white breast.*

† I have noticed this beautiful, though mournful episode in the argument on the geography, to prove the Lubar the river now known as the Six-mile waters. *C.*

my love, the lonely sun-beam of Dunscaith! Strike the harp in the praise of Bragéla; she that I left in the Isle of Mist,* the spouse of Semo's son! Dost thou raise thy fair face from the rock to find the sails of Cuthullin? The sea is rolling distant far; its white foam deceives thee for my sails. Retire for it is night, my love; the dark winds sing in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feast; think of the times that are past. I will not return till the storm of war is ceased. O Connal! speak of war and arms, and send her from my mind. Lovely with her flowing hair is the white-bosomed daughter of Sorglan."

Connal, slow to speak, replied, "Guard again the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the strength of Swaran. Cuthullin! I am for peace till the race of Selma come; till Fingal come, the first of men, and beam, like the sun, on our fields!" The hero struck the shield of alarms, the warriors of the night moved on! The rest lay in the heath of the deer, and slept beneath the dusky wind. The ghosts† of the lately dead were near,

* The Isle of Sky, of which Cuthullin's father was King or Chief. C.

† It was long the opinion of the ancient Scots, that a ghost was heard shrieking near the place where a death was to happen soon after. The accounts given, to this day, among the vulgar, of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and surrounds twice or thrice a place destined for the person to die; and then goes along the road through which the funeral is to pass, shrieking at intervals; at last, the meteor and ghost disappear above the burial place.

and swam on the gloomy clouds: And far distant in the dark silence of Lena,* the feeble voices of death were faintly heard.

* The Heath of Lena may fairly be said to have been the scene of all the principal battles of Fingal, &c. in Ireland. *C.*

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK II.

The ghost of Crugal, one of the Irish heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuthullin in the next battle; and earnestly advises him to make peace with Swaran. Connal communicates the vision; but Cuthullin is inflexible; from a principle of honour he would not be the first to sue for peace, and he resolved to continue the war. Morning comes; Swaran proposes dishonourable terms to Cuthullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obstinately fought for some time, until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole Irish army gave way. Cuthullin and Connal cover their retreat; Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are soon followed by Cuthullin himself, who descries the fleet of Fingal making towards the coast; but, night coming on, he lost sight of it again. Cuthullin, dejected after his defeat, attributes his ill-success to the death of Ferda his friend, whom he had killed some time before. Carril, to shew that ill success did not always attend those who innocently killed their friends, introduces the episode of Comal and Galvina.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK II.

CONNAL* lay by the sound of the mountain stream, beneath the aged tree. A stone, with its moss, supported his head. Shrill through the heath of Lena, he heard the voice of night. At distance from the heroes he lay; the son of the sword feared no foe! The hero beheld, in his rest, a dark red stream of fire rushing down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam, a chief who fell in fight. He fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast! "Crugal," said the mighty Connal, son of Dedgal, famed on the hill of hinds! why so

* The scenes here described will appear natural to those who have been in the highlands of Scotland. The poet removes him to a distance from the army, to add more horror to the description of Crugal's ghost by the loneness of the place. *M.*—The observation is equally applicable to Ireland up to the present hour. Connal lay on the heath of Lena. *C.*

pale and sad, thou breaker of the shields? Thou hast never been pale for fear! What disturbs the departed Crugal?" Dim, and in tears, he stood and stretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego!

"My spirit, Connal, is on my hills: my corse on the sands of Erin.* Thou shalt never talk with Crugal, nor find his lone steps in the heath. I am light as the blast of Cromla. I move like the shadow of mist! Connal, son of Colgar, I see a cloud of death: it hovers dark over the plains of Lena. The sons of green Erin must fall. Remove from the field of ghosts." Like the darkened moon he retired, in the midst of the whistling blast. "Stay," said the mighty Connal, "stay, my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, son of the windy Cromla! What cave is thy lonely house? What green-headed hill the place of thy repose? Shall we not hear thee in the storm? In the noise of the mountain-stream? When the feeble sons of the wind come forth, and, scarcely seen, pass over the desert?"

The soft-voiced Connal rose, in the midst of his sounding arms. He struck his shield above Cuthullin. The son of battle waked. "Why," said the ruler of the car, "comes Connal through my night? My spear might turn against the sound; and Cuthullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Con-

* This observation leaves me to infer that Cuthullin attacked Swaran immediately he landed on the beach—a fine sandy one—of Belfast Loch! Vide the map. *C.*

nal; son of Colgar, speak, thy counsel is the sun of heaven!" "Son of Semo!" replied the chief, "the ghost of Crugal came from his cave. The stars dim-twinkled through his form. His voice was like the sound of a distant stream. He is a messenger of death! He speaks of the dark and narrow house! Sue for peace, O chief of Erin! or fly over the heath of Lena."

"He spoke to Connal," replied the hero, "though stars dim-twinkled through his form! Son of Colgar, it was the wind that murmured across thy ear. Or if it was the form* of Crugal, why didst thou not force him to my sight? Hast thou inquired where is his cave? The house of that son of wind? My sword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from Crugal. But small is his knowledge, Connal; he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills! who could tell him there of our fall?" "Ghosts fly on clouds, and ride on winds," said Connal's voice of wisdom. "They rest together in their caves, and talk of mortal men."

"Then let them talk of mortal men; of every man but Erin's chief. Let me be forgot in their cave. I will not fly from Swaran! If fall I must, my tomb shall rise, amidst the fame of future times. The hunter shall shed a tear on my stone; sorrow

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* The poet teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time concerning the state of separate souls. From Connal's expression, "That the stars dim-twinkled through the form of Crugal," and Cuthullin's reply, we may gather that they both thought the soul was material: something like the εἴδωλον of the ancient Greeks.

shall dwell round the high-bosomed Bragéla. I fear not death, to fly I fear! Fingal has seen me victorious! Thou dim phantom of the hill, shew thyself to me! come on thy beam of heaven; shew me my death in thine hand; yet I will not fly, thou feeble son of the wind! Go, son of Colgar, strike the shield. It hangs between the spears. Let my warriors rise to the sound, in the midst of the battles of Erin. Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of his stormy isles,* we shall fight, O Colgar's son, and die in the battle of heroes!"

The sound spreads wide. The heroes rise, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They stood on the heath, like oaks with all their branches round them; when they echo to the stream of frost, and their withered leaves are rustling to the wind! High Cromla's head of clouds is grey. Morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue mist swims slowly by, and hides the sons of Inis-fail!†

"Rise ye," said the king of the dark brown shields, "ye that came from Lochlin's waves. The sons of Erin have fled from our arms; pursue them over the plains of Lena! Morla, go to Cormac's

* Cuthullin, the general of young Cormac, the kinsman of Fingal, here expresses his expectation of Fingal coming to his assistance. *C.*

† In the geographical argument I have noticed this highly poetical remark. Those who know the country have only to imagine themselves at Carmona, the site on which stood the Irish army, and in thought view the army of Swaran on the plain running to the shore below them. The mist of Cromla—Cave-hill—would prevent them being seen, and enable them to appreciate at once its justness and beauty. *C.*

hall. Bid them yield to Swaran; before his people sink to the tomb; and silence spread over his isle." They rose rustling like a flock of sea-fowl, when the waves expel them from the shore. Their sound was like a thousand streams that meet in Cona's vale, when, after a stormy night, they turn their dark eddies beneath the pale light of the morn.

As the dark shades of autumn fly over hills of grass: so gloomy, dark, successive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the stag of Morven, moved stately before them the king. His shining shield is on his side, like a flame on the heath at night; when the world is silent and dark, and the traveller sees some ghost sporting in the beam! Dimly gleam the hills around, and shew indistinctly their oaks! A blast from the troubled ocean removed the settled mist. The sons of Erin appear, like a ridge of rocks on the coast;* when mariners, on shores unknown, are trembling at veering winds!

" Go, Morla, go," said the king of Lochlin, " offer peace to these! Offer the terms we give to kings, when nations bow down to our swords. When the valiant are dead in war; when virgins weep on the field!" Tall Morla came, the son of Swarth, and stately strode the youth along! He spoke to Erin's blue-eyed chief, among the lesser heroes. " Take Swaran's peace," the warrior spoke, " the peace he gives to kings, when nations bow to his sword.

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* This is as beautifully natural and great, as poetical, and gives an inference that is circumstantial proof of the scenes I have represented. *C.*

Leave Erin's streamy plains to us, and give thy spouse and dog. Thy spouse high-bosom'd, heaving fair! Thy dog that overtakes the wind! Give these to prove the weakness of thine arm; live then beneath our power!"

"Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, Cuthullin never yields. I give him the dark rolling sea; I give his people graves in Erin. But never shall a stranger have the pleasing sun-beam of my love. No deer shall fly on Lochlin's hills, before swift-footed Luath." "Vain ruler of the car," said Morla, "wilt thou then fight the king? The king whose ships of many groves could carry off thine isle? So little is thy green-hilled Erin to him who rules the stormy waves!" "In words I yield to many, Morla. My sword shall yield to none. Erin shall own the sway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuthullin live! O Connal, first of mighty men, thou hear'st the words of Morla. Shall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the shields? Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didst thou threaten us with death? The narrow house shall receive me, in the midst of the light of renown. Exalt, ye sons of Erin, exalt the spear and bend the bow: rush on the foe in darkness, as the spirits of stormy nights!"

Then dismal, roaring, fierce, and deep the gloom of battle poured along; as mist that is rolled on a valley, when storms invade the silent sun-shine of heaven! Cuthullin moves before in arms, like an angry ghost before a cloud; when meteors inclose him with fire; when the dark winds are in his hand. Carril, far on the heath, bids the horn of battle sound

He raises the voice of song, and pours his soul into the minds of the brave.

"Where," said the mouth of the song, "where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth; the hall of shells * is silent. Sad is the spouse of Crugal! She is a stranger† in the hall of her grief. But who is she that, like a sun-beam, flies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena,‡ lovely fair, the spouse of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is shrill. Pale, empty is thy Crugal now! His form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of rest; he raises his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain-bee; like the collected flies of the eve! But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the sword of Lochlin is in her side. Cairbar, she is fallen, the rising thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours!" §

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful sound. He rushed along like ocean's whale. He saw the death of his daughter: He roared in the midst of thousands. His spear met a son of Lochlin! battle spreads

* The ancient Scots, as well as the present Highlanders, drunk in shells; hence it is that we so often meet, in the old poetry, with *the chief of shells* and *the halls of shells*.

† Crugal had married Degrena but a little time before the battle, consequently she may with propriety be called a stranger in the hall of her grief.

‡ Deo-gréna signifies *a sun-beam*.

§ How forcibly animating is this appeal of the Irish bard to the army, which has in the preceding day's battle lost the beloved chieftain, whose mourning wife was conjured up in all her distress, to inspire them with revenge for his loss! C.

from wing to wing! As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves; as fire in the pines of a hundred hills; so loud, so ruinous, so vast the ranks of men are hewn down. Cuthullin cut off heroes like thistle; Swaran wasted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, Cairbar of the bossy shield! Morglan lies in lasting rest! Ca-olt trembles as he dies! His white breast is stained with blood; his yellow hair stretched in the dust of his native land! He often had spread the feast where he fell. He often there had raised the voice of the harp: when his dogs leaped around for joy; and the youths of the chase prepared the bow!

Still Swaran advanced, as a stream that bursts from the desert. The little hills are rolled in its course; the rocks are half sunk by its side! But Cuthullin stood before him, like a hill, that catches the clouds of heaven. The winds contend on its head of pines; the hail rattles on its rocks. But firm in its strength, it stands and shades the silent vale of Cona! So Cuthullin shaded the sons of Erin, and stood in the midst of thousands. Blood rises like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around. But Erin falls on either wing, like snow in the day of the sun.

"O sons of Erin," said Grumal, "Lochlin conquers on the field. Why strive we as reeds against the wind? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds." He fled like the stag of Morven; his spear is a trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, chief of the little soul: they fell in the battle of heroes, on Lena's echoing heath. High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin stood. He

slew a mighty son of Lochlin, and spoke, in haste to Connal. "O Connal, first of mortal men, thou hast taught this arm of death! Though Erin's sons have fled, shall we not fight the foe? Carril, son of other times, carry my friends to that bushy hill. Here, Connal, let us stand, like rocks, and save our flying friends."

Connal mounts the car of gems. They stretch their shields, like the darkened moon, the daughter of the starry skies, when she moves, a dun circle through heaven; and dreadful change is expected by men. Sithfadda panted up the hill,* and Sronnal' haughty steed. Like waves behind a whale behind them rushed the foe. Now on the rising side of Cromla stood Erin's few sad sons; like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by the winds of the stormy night; distant withered, dark they stand, with not a leaf to shake in the gale.

Cuthullin stood beside an oak. He rolled his red eye in silence, and heard the wind in his bushy hair; the scout of ocean came, Moran the son of Fithil. "The ships," he cried, "the ships of the lonely isles. Fingal comes, the first of men, the breaker of the shields! The waves foam before his black prows! His masts with sails are like groves in clouds!" "Blow," said Cuthullin, "blow ye winds that rush along my isle of mist.† Come to the death of thou-

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* This proves the battle to have been fought at or near the scene which I have before described. *C.*

† To prove the consistency of the Poems and Poet, this sentence speaks volumes! The winds that rush along the isle of Sky were the best winds that could blow, to waft Fingal from Morven into Belfast Loch. Vide the map. *C.*

sands, O king of resounding Selma! Thy sails, my friend, are to me the clouds of the morning; thy ships the light of heaven; and thou thyself a pillar of fire that beams on the world by night. O Connal, first of men, how pleasing, in grief, are our friends! But the night is gathering around! Where now are the ships of Fingal? Here let us pass the hours of darkness; here wish for the moon of heaven."

The winds come down on the woods. The torrents rush from the rocks. Rain gathers round the head of Cromla. The red stars tremble between flying clouds. Sad by the side of a stream whose sound is echoed by a tree, sad by the side of a stream the chief of Erin sits. Connal, son of Colgar, is there, and Carril of other times. "Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin," said the son of Semo, "unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin, since he slew his friend! Ferda, son of Damman, I loved thee as myself!"

"How, Cuthullin, son of Semo! how fell the breaker of the shields? Well I remember," said Connal, "the son of the noble Damman. Tall and fair he was like the rainbow of heaven." Ferda, from Albion came, the chief of a hundred hills. In Muri's* hall he learned the sword, and won the friendship of Cuthullin. We moved to the chase together: one was our bed in the heath!

Deugala was the spouse of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of beauty, but her heart was the house of pride.

* A place in Ulster. *M.*—Probably at Temora the Capital. *C.*

She loved that sun-beam of youth, the son of noble Damman. "Cairbar," said the white-armed Deugala, "give me half of the herd. No more I will remain in your halls. Divide the herd, dark Cairbar!" "Let Cuthullin," said Cairbar, "divide my herd on the hill. His breast is the seat of justice. Depart, thou light of beauty!" I went and divided the herd. One snow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala rose!

"Son of Damman," begun the fair, "Cuthullin hath pained my soul. I must hear of his death, or Lubar's stream shall roll over me. My pale ghost shall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuthullin, or pierce this heaving breast." "Deugala," said the fair-haired youth, "how shall I slay the son of Semo? He is the friend of my secret thoughts. Shall I then lift the sword?" She wept three days before the chief, on the fourth he said he would fight. "I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his sword! Could I wander on the hill alone? Could I behold the grave of Cuthullin?" We fought on the plain of Muri. Our swords avoid a wound. They slide on the helmets of steel; or sound on the slippery shields. Deugala was near with a smile, and said to the son of Damman: "Thine arm is feeble, sun-beam of youth! Thy years are not strong for steel. Yield to the son of Semo. He is a rock on Malmor."

The tear is in the eye of youth. He faultering said to me: "Cuthullin, raise thy bossy shield. Defend thee from the hand of thy friend. My soul

is laden with grief: for I must slay the chief of men!" I sighed as the wind in the cleft of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my steel. The sun-beam of battle fell: the first of Cuthullin's friends! Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin since the hero fell!

"Mournful is thy tale, son of the car," said Carril of other times. "It sends my soul back to the ages of old, to the days of other years. Often have I heard of Comal, who slew the friend he loved; yet victory attended his steel: the battle was consumed in his presence!"

Comal was a son of Albion; the chief of an hundred hills! His deer drunk of a thousand streams. A thousand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildness of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was she! the daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a sun-beam among women. Her hair was the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chase. Her bow-string sounded on the winds. Her soul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their course in the chase was one. Happy were their words in secret. But Grumal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone steps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal!*

One day, tired of the chase, when the mist had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met, in the cave of Ronan. It was the

* The friends of Ossian must give credit to the Irish bard, Carril, for this beautiful episode, which is, doubtless, one of the most poetical in the collection. *C.*

wonted haunt of Comal. Its sides were hung with his arms. A hundred shields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of sounding steel. "Rest here," he said, "my love, Galbina: thou light of the cave of Ronan! A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will soon return." "I fear," she said, "dark Grumal my foe: he haunts the cave of Ronan! I will rest among the arms; but soon return, my love."

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She clothed her fair sides with his armour; she strode from the cave of Ronan! He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkness dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galbina fell in blood! He run with wildness in his steps: he called the daughter of Conloch. No answer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love? He saw, at length, her heaving heart, beating around the arrow he threw. "O Conloch's daughter, is it thou?" He sunk upon her breast! The hunters found the hapless pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and silent were his steps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought, the strangers fled. He searched for death along the field. But who could slay the mighty Comal! He threw away his dark-brown shield. An arrow found his manly breast. He sleeps with his loved Galbina at the noise of the sounding surge! Their green tombs are seen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north.

F I N G A L

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK III.

Cuthullin, pleased with the story of Carril, insists with that bard for more of his songs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca the beautiful sister of Swaran. He had scarce finished when Calmar, the son of Matha, who had advised the first battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's design to surprise the remains of the Irish army. He himself proposes to withstand singly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pass, till the Irish should make good their retreat. Cuthullin, touched with the gallant proposal of Calmar, resolves to accompany him, and order Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Irish. Morning comes, Calmar dies of his wounds; and, the ships of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the pursuit of the Irish, and returns to oppose Fingal's landing. Cuthullin ashamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura, (Carrickfergus.) Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not decisive. The king, who had observed the gallant behaviour of his grandson Oscar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes as the best model for his conduct; which introduces the episode concerning Fainasollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Oscar are dispatched to observe the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul the son of Morni desires the command of the army, in the next battle; which Fingal promises to give him. Some general reflections of the poet close the third day.

FINGAL

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK III.

"PLEASANT are the words of the song," said Cuthullin! "lovely the tales of other times! They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes; when the sun is faint on its sides, and the lake is settled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raise again thy voice! let me hear the song of Selma: which was sung in my halls of joy, when Fingal king of shields was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers."

"Fingal! thou dweller of battle," said Carril, "early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was consumed in thy wrath, when thy youth strove with the beauty of maids. They smiled at the fair-blooming face of the hero; but death was in his hands. He

* The second night, since the opening of the poem, continues; and Cuthullin, Connal, and Carril, still sit in the place described in the preceding book. The story of Agandecca is introduced here with propriety, as great use is made of it in the course of the poem, and as it, in some measure, brings about the catastrophe.

was strong as the waters of Lora.* His followers were the roar of a thousand streams. They took the king of Lochlin in war; they restored him to his ships. His big heart swelled with pride; the death of the youth was dark in his soul. For none ever, but Fingal, had overcome the strength of the mighty Starno.† He sat in the hall of his shells in Lochlin's woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often sung round the circle‡ of Loda: when the stone of power heard his voice, and battle turned in the field of the valiant!"

"Go, grey-haired Snivan," Starno said, "go to Ardven's sea-surrounded rock. Tell to the king of Selma; he the fairest among his thousands, tell him I give him my daughter, the loveliest maid that ever heaved a breast of snow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her soul is generous and mild. Let him come with his bravest heroes, to the daughter of the secret hall!" Snivan came to Selma's hall: Fair-haired Fingal attended his steps. His kindled soul flew to the maid, as he bounded on the waves of the north. "Welcome," said the dark-brown Starno, "welcome, king of rocky Morven: welcome his heroes of might, sons of the

* It is probable that the Don Lora, in the northern part of Antrim County, opposite Morven, is here alluded to. *C.*

† Starno was the father of Swaran as well as Agandecca. His fierce and cruel character is well marked in other poems concerning the times.

‡ This passage most certainly alludes to the religion of Lochlin, and *the stone of power*, here mentioned, is the image of one of the deities of Scandinavia.

distant isle! Three days within my halls shall ye feast; three days pursue my boars; that your fame may reach the maid who dwells in the secret hall."

Starno designed their death. He gave the feast of shells. Fingal, who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of steel. The sons of death were afraid: They fled from the eyes of the king. The voice of sprightly mirth arose. The trembling harps of joy were strung. Bards sung the battle of heroes: They sung the heaving breast of love. Ullin, Fingal's bard, was there: the sweet voice of resounding Cona. He praised the daughter of Lochlin; and Morven's* high-descended chief. The daughter of Lochlin overheard. She left the hall of her secret sigh! She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the east. Loveliness was around her as light. Her steps were the music of songs. She saw the youth and loved him. He was the stolen sigh of her soul. Her blue eye rolled on him in secret: she blest the chief of resounding Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, shone bright on the wood of boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno; and Fingal, king of shields. Half the day they spent in the chase; the spear of Selma was red in blood. It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears; it was then she came with her voice of love, and spoke to the king of Morven. "Fingal, high descended chief,

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* All the North-west coast of Scotland probably went of old under the name of Morven, which signifies a ridge of very high hills. *M.*—Ardven also appears to have been a name for Morven—now part of Argyleshire. *C.*

trust not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed his chief. Beware of the wood of death. But, remember, son of the isle, remember Agandecca: save me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven!"

The youth with unconcern went on; his heroes by his side. The sons of death fell by his hand; and Gormal echoed around! Before the halls of Starno the sons of the chase convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he said, "Agandecca to her lovely king of Morven! His hand is stained with the blood of my people; her words have not been in vain!" She came with the red eye of tears. She came with loosely flowing locks. Her white breast heaved with broken sighs, like the foam of the streamy Lubar.* Starno pierced her side with steel. She fell, like a wreath of snow, which slides from the rocks of Ronan; when the woods are still, and echo deepens in the vale! Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms. The gloom of battle roared; Lochlin fled or died. Pale, in his bounding ship he closed the maid of the softest soul. Her tomb ascends on Ardven; the sea roars round her narrow dwelling.

"Blessed be her soul," said Cuthullin; "blessed be the mouth of the song! Strong was the youth of Fingal; strong is his arm of age. Lochlin shall

*This is a beautifully descriptive allusion to the Six-mile waters,—whose foam I have often witnessed with pleasure, and in idea beheld the fair Agandecca whom the poet compared to it. *C.*

fall again before the king of echoing Morven. Shew thy face from a cloud, O moon! light his white sails on the wave; and if any strong spirit* of heaven sits on that low-hung cloud, turn his dark ships from the rock, thou rider of the storm!"

Such were the words of Cuthullin at the sound of the mountain-stream; when Calmar ascended the hill, the wounded son of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending spear. Feeble is the arm of battle; but strong the soul of the hero! "Welcome! O son of Matha," said Connal, "welcome art thou to thy friends! Why bursts that broken sigh, from the breast of him who never feared before? And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed steel! My soul brightens in danger: in the noise of arms. I am of the race of battle. My fathers never feared."

"Cormar was the first of my race. He sported through the storms of waves. His black skiff bounded on ocean; he travelled on the wings of the wind. A spirit once embroiled the night. Seas swell, and rocks resound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared, and came to land: then blushed that he

* This is the only passage in the poem that has the appearance of religion. But Cuthullin's apostrophe to this spirit is accompanied with a doubt, so that it is not easy to determine whether the hero meant a superior being, or the ghosts of deceased warriors, who were supposed in those times to rule the storms, and to transport themselves in a gust of wind from one country to another

feared at all. He rushed again among the waves, to find the son of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark; he stood with sword unsheathed. When the low-hung vapour passed, he took it by the curling head. He searched its dark womb with his steel. The son of the wind forsook the air. The moon and stars returned! Such was the boldness of my race. Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the lifted sword. They best succeed who dare!

"But now, ye sons of green Erin, retire from Lena's bloody heath. Collect the sad remnant of our friends, and join the sword of Fingal. I heard the sound of Lochlin's advancing arms! Calmar will remain and fight. My voice shall be such, my friends, as if thousands were behind me. But, son of Semo, remember me. Remember Calmar's lifeless corse. When Fingal shall have wasted the field, place me by some stone of remembrance, that future times may hear my fame; that the mother of Calmar may rejoice in my renown."

"No: son of Matha," said Cuthullin, "I will never leave thee here. My joy is in unequal fight: my soul increases in danger. Connal, and Carril of other times, carry off the sad sons of Erin. When the battle is over, search for us in this narrow way. For near this oak we shall fall, in the stream of the battle of thousands!" "O Fithil's son, with flying speed rush over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is fallen. Bid the king of Morven come. O let him come like the sun in a storm, to lighten, to restore the isle!"

Morning is grey on Cromla. The sons of the sea ascend.* Calmar stood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling soul. But pale was the face of the chief. He leaned on his father's spear. That spear which he brought from Lara, when the soul of his mother was sad; the soul of the lonely Alcletha, waining in the sorrow of years. But slowly now the hero falls, like a tree on the plain. Dark Cuthullin stands alone like a rock in a sandy vale. The sea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened sides. Its head is covered with foam; the hills are echoing around.

Now from the grey mist of the ocean, the white-sailed ships of Fingal appear. High is the grove of their masts, as they nod, by turns, on the rolling wave. Swaran saw them from the hill. He returned from the sons of Erin. As ebbs the resounding sea, through the hundred isles of Inistore; so loud, so vast, so immense returned the sons of Lochlin against the king. But bending weeping, sad, and slow, and dragging his long spear behind, Cuthullin sunk in Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of renown!

"How many lie there of my heroes! the chiefs of Erin's race! they that were cheerful in the hall when the sound of the shells arose! No more shall

* The Scandinavians being of course encamped on the shore, near their ships in the bay of Carmona, having as yet gained no advantage over Cuthullin, had naturally to ascend the hill to get to the heath of Lena and the Irish army, whose position was near Cromla—the cave—hill. *C.*

I find their steps in the heath. No more shall I hear their voice in the chase. Pale, silent, low on bloody beds, are they who were my friends! O spirits of the lately dead, meet Cuthullin on his heath! Speak to him on the wind, when the rustling tree of Tura's cave resounds. There, far remote, I shall lie unknown. No bard shall hear of me. No grey stone shall rise to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela! departed is my fame." Such were the words of Cuthullin, when he sunk in the woods of Cromla!

Fingal, tall in his ship, stretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of the steel: it was like the green meteor of death, setting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.

"The battle is past," said the king. "I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena! mournful the oaks of Cromla!* The hunters have fallen in their strength: the son of Semo is no more. Ryno and Fillan, my sons, sound the horn of Fingal. Ascend that hill on the shore; call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times. Be your voice like that of your father, when he enters the battles of his strength. I wait on Lena's shore for Swaran.

* This is beautifully descriptive of the scene.—Fingal, from the bow of his vessel, was at once enabled to judge of the state of affairs,—a very convincing proof of the proximity of Cromla and Lena to the shore of Tura's—Carrickfergus—Lay. *C.*

Let him come with all his race; strong in battle are the friends of the dead!"

Fair Ryno as lightning gleamed along. Dark Fillan rushed like the shade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard. The sons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal. As the roaring eddy of ocean returning from the kingdom of snows; so strong, so dark, so sudden came down the sons of Lochlin.* The king in their front appears, in the dismal pride of his arms! Wrath burns on his dark-brown face: his eyes roll in the fire of his valour. Fingal beheld the son of Starno: he remembered Agandecca. For Swaran with the tears of youth had mourned his white-bosomed sister. He sent Ullin of songs to bid him to the feast of shells; for pleasant on Fingal's soul returned the memory of the first of his loves!

Ullin came with aged steps, and spoke to Starno's son. "O thou that dwellest afar, surrounded like a rock, with thy waves! come to the feast of the king, and pass the day in rest. To-morrow let us fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing shields." "To-day," said Starno's wrathful son, "we break the echoing shields: to-morrow my feast shall be spread; but Fingal shall lie on earth." "To-morrow let his feast be spread," said Fingal with a smile. "To-day, O my sons! we shall break the echoing shields. Ossian, stand thou near my arm.

* On reading over this passage, a person once at Belfast, or Carmona, must naturally think himself going down the hill with Swaran to meet Fingal coming from the beach, so truly and elegantly descriptive is the poetry. C.

Gaul, lift thy terrible sword. Fergus, bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven. Lift your shields like the darkened moon. Be your spears like the meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame. Equal my deeds in battle."

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the streams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly successive over heaven; as the dark ocean assails the shore of the desert: so roaring, so vast, so terrible, the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath.* The groan of the people spread over the hills: it was like the thunder of night, when the cloud bursts on Cona; and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind. Fingal rushed on in his strength, terrible as the spirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven, to see the children of his pride. The oaks resound on their mountains, and the rocks fall down before him. Dimly seen, as lightens the night, he strides largely from hill to hill. Bloody was the hand of my father, when he whirled the gleam of his sword. He remembers the battles of his youth. The field is wasted in his course

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire. Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward with feet of wind. Fillan like the mist of the hill. Ossian like a rock came down. I exulted in the strength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm! dismal the gleam of my sword! My locks were not then so grey; nor trembled my hands with age. My

* *Vide* the Map. C.

eyes were not closed in darkness; my feet failed not in the race!

Who can relate the deaths of the people? Who the deeds of mighty heroes? when Fingal, burning in his wrath, consumed the sons of Lochlin? groans swelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, staring like a herd of deer, the sons of Lochlin convene on Lena.* We sat and heard the sprightly harp, at Lubar's gentle stream. Fingal himself was next to the foe. He listened to the tales of his bards. His godlike race were in the song, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his shield, the king of Morven sat. The wind whistled through his locks; his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him, on his bending spear, my young, my valiant Oscar stood. He admired the king of Morven: his deeds were swelling in his soul!

"Son of my son," begun the king, "O Oscar, pride of youth! I saw the shining of thy sword. I gloried in my race. Pursue the fame of our fathers; be thou what they have been, when Trenmor lived, the first of men, and Trathal the father of heroes! They fought the battle in their youth. They are the song of bards. O Oscar! bend the strong in arm! but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the grass, to those who ask

* It appears that Fingal had driven Lochlin from hill to hill, over four or five miles of country, from Carmona to the banks of Lubar,—Six-mile water. *C.*

thine aid. So Trenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured; the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel.

"Oscar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainasóllis came: that sun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Craca's* king! I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-sailed boat appeared far off; we saw it like a mist, that rode on ocean's wind. It soon approached. We saw the fair. Her white breast heaved with sighs. The wind was in her loose dark hair; her rosy cheek had tears. "Daughter of beauty, calm I said, "what sigh is in thy breast? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the sea? my sword is not unmatched in war, but dauntless is my heart."

"To thee I fly," with sighs she said, "O prince of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of the generous shells, supporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing isle owned me the sun-beam of his race. Cromala's hills have heard the sighs of love for unhappy Fainasóllis! Sora's chief beheld me fair; he loved the daughter of Craca. His sword is a beam of light upon the warrior's side. But dark is his brow, and tempests are in his soul. I shun him, on the roaring sea, but Sora's chief pursues."

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* What the Craca here mentioned was, is not, at this distance of time, easy to determine. The most probable opinion is, that it was one of the Shetland isles. There is a story concerning a daughter of the king of Craca in the sixth book.

"Rest thou," I said, "behind my shield; rest in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his soul. In some lone cave I might conceal thee, daughter of the sea, but Fingal never flies. Where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the storm of spears." I saw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Craca's fair. Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appeared the ship of stormy Borbar. His masts high bended over the sea behind their sheets of snow. White roll the waters on either side. The strength of ocean sounds. "Come thou," I said, "from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the storm! Partake the feast within my hall. It is the house of strangers."

The maid stood trembling by my side. He drew the bow. She fell. "Unerring is thy hand," I said, "but feeble was the foe!" We fought, nor weak the strife of death! He sunk beneath my sword. We laid them in two tombs of stone; the hapless lovers of youth! Such have I been in my youth, O Oscar! be thou like the age of Fingal. Never search thou for battle; nor shun it when it comes.

"Fillan and Oscar of the dark-brown hair! ye, that are swift in the race! fly over the heath in my presence. View the sons of Lochlin. Far off I hear the noise of their feet, like distant sounds in woods. Go, that they may not fly from my sword, along the waves of the north. For many chiefs of Erin's race lie here on the dark bed of death. The children of war are low; the sons of echoing Cromla."

The heroes flew like two dark clouds: two dark

clouds that are the chariots of ghosts; when air's dark children come forth to frighten hapless men. It was then that Gaul,* the son of Morni, stood like a rock in night. His spear is glittering to the stars; his voice like many streams.

"Son of battle," cried the chief, "O Fingal, king of shells! let the bards of many songs soothe Erin's friends to rest. Fingal, sheath thou thy sword of death; and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame; our king is the only breaker of shields! When morning rises on our hills, behold, at a distance, our deeds. Let Lochlin feel the sword of Morni's son; that bards may sing of me. Such was the custom, heretofore, of Fingal's noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of swords, in battles of the spear."

"O son of Morni," Fingal replied, "I glory in thy fame. Fight; but my spear shall be near, to aid thee in the midst of danger Raise, raise the voice, ye sons of song! and lull me into rest. Here will Fingal lie, amidst the wind of night. And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land; if thou sittest on a blast of wind, among

* Gaul, the son of Morni, was chief of a tribe that disputed long the pre-eminence with Fingal himself. They were reduced at last to obedience, and Gaul, from an enemy, turned Fingal's best friend and greatest hero. His character is something like that of Ajax in the Iliad; a hero of more strength than conduct in battle. He was very fond of military fame, and here he demands the next battle to himself. The poet, by an artifice, removes Fingal, that his return may be the more magnificent.

the high-shrowded masts of Lochlin; come to my dreams,* my fair one. Shew thy bright face to my soul."

Many a voice and many a harp, in tuneful sounds arose. Of Fingal's noble deeds they sung; of Fingal's noble race. And sometimes, on the lovely sound, was heard the name of Ossian. I often fought, and often won, in battles of the spear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn, I walk with little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not! The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven! Blest be thy soul, thou king of swords, thou most renowned on the hills of

* The poet prepares us for the dream of Fingal in the next book.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK IV.

ɪe action of the Poem being suspended by night, Ossian takes that opportunity to relate his own actions at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Everallin, who was the mother of Oscar, and had died some time before the expedition of Fingal into Ireland. Her ghost appears to him, and tells him that Oscar, who had been sent, the beginning of the night, to observe the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party, and almost overpowered. Ossian relieves his son, and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king rises, calls his army together, and, as he had promised the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul, the son of Morni, while he himself, after charging his sons to behave gallantly and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins; the poet relates Oscar's great actions. But when Oscar, in conjunction with his father, conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in person, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal sends Ullin his bard to encourage him with a war song, but notwithstanding Swaran prevails; and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, descending from the hill, rallies them again; Swaran desists from the pursuit, possesses himself of a rising ground, restores the ranks, and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the necessary orders, and renews the battle. Cuthullin, who, with his friend Connal, and Carril his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noise, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he saw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindered by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himself upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, sends Carril to congratulate that hero on his success.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK IV *

WHO comes with her songs from the hill, like the bow of the showery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love! The white-armed daughter of Toscar! Often hast thou heard my song; often given the tear of beauty. Dost thou come to the wars of thy people? to hear the actions of Oscar? When shall I cease to mourn, by the streams of resounding Cona? My years have passed away in battle. My age is darkened with grief!

"Daughter of the hand of snow! I was not so

* Fingal being asleep, and the action suspended by night, the poet introduces the story of his courtship of Everallin the daughter of Branno. The episode is necessary to clear up several passages that follow in the poem; at the same time that it naturally brings on the action of the book, which may be supposed to begin about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem. This book, as many of Ossian's other compositions, is addressed to the beautiful Malvina, the daughter of Toscar. She appears to have been in love with Oscar, and to have affected the company of the father after the death of the son.

mournful and blind. I was not so dark and forlorn when Everallin loved me! Everallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-bosomed daughter of Branno: A thousand heroes sought the maid, she refused her love to a thousand. The sons of the sword were despised: for graceful in her eyes was Ossian! I went, in suit of the maid, to Lego's sable surge.* Twelve of my people were there, the sons of streamy Morven! We came to Branno, friend of strangers! Branno of the sounding mail! "From whence," he said, "are the arms of steel? Not easy to win is the maid, who has denied the blue-eyed sons of Erin! But blessed be thou, O son of Fingal! Happy is the maid that waits thee! Though twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou son of fame!"

He opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Everallin. Joy kindled in our manly breasts. We blest the maid of Branno. "Above us on the hill appeared the people of stately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the chief. The heath flamed wide with their arms. There Colla; there Durra of wounds; there mighty Toscar, and Tago; there Frestal, the victorious, stood; Dairo of the happy deeds: Dala the battle's bulwark in the narrow way! The sword flamed in the hand of Cormac. Graceful was the look of the hero! Eight were the heroes of Ossian. Ullin, stormy son of war. Mullo of the generous

* This passage describes the situation of the seat of Branno, the grandfather of Oscar.—The *Legon* has no *sable surge* until one arrives in the neighbourhood of Lisburn—between that and Belfast it glides gently along oozy and reedy shores. *C.*

deeds. The noble, the graceful Seelacha. Oglan, and Cerdal the wrathful. Dumariccan's brows of death ! And why should Ogar be the last ; so wide renowned on the hills of Ardven ?"

" Ogar met Dala the strong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was, like wind, on ocean's foamy waves. The dagger is remembered by Ogar ; the weapon which he loved. Nine times he drowned it in Dala's side. The stormy battle turned. Three times I broke on Cormac's shield : three times he broke his spear. But unhappy youth of love ! I cut his head away. Five times I shook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled. Whoever would have told me, lovely maid, when then I strove in battle ; that blind, forsaken, and forlorn I now should pass the night ; firm ought his mail to have been ; unmatched his arm in war !"

On* Lena's gloomy heath, the voice of music died away. The unconstant blast blew hard. The high oak shook its leaves around. Of Everallin were my thoughts, when in all the light of beauty she came. Her blue eyes rolling in tears. She stood on a cloud before my sight, and spoke with feeble

* The poet returns to his subject. If one could fix the time of the year in which the action of the poem happened, from the scene described here, I should be tempted to place it in autumn. The trees shed their leaves, and the winds are variable, both which circumstance agree with that season of the year. M.—The above is highly probable, as it is not likely that the Scandinavians would, in winter, venture across, the North sea in the galleys or ships of those times—namely, wicker-work canoes covered with hides. C.

voice! "Rise, Ossian, rise, and save my son; save Oscar prince of men. Near the red oak of Lubar's stream, he fights with Lochlin's sons." She sunk into her cloud again. I covered me with steel. My spear supported my steps; my rattling armour rung. I hummed, as I was wont in danger, the songs of heroes of old. Like distant thunder Lochlin heard. They fled; my son pursued.

I called him like a distant stream. Oscar return over Lena. "No further pursue the foe," I said, "though Ossian is behind thee." He came! and pleasant to my ear was Oscar's sounding steel. "Why didst thou stop my hand," he said, "till death had covered all? For dark and dreadful by the stream they met thy son and Fillan! They watched the terrors of the night. Our swords have conquered some. But as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white sands of Mora, so dark advance the sons of Lochlin, over Lena's rustling heath! The ghosts of night shriek afar: I have seen the meteors of death. Let me awake the king of Morven, he that smiles in danger! He that is like the sun of heaven, rising in a storm!"

Fingal had started from a dream, and leaned on Trenmor's shield; the dark-brown shield of his fathers; which they had lifted of old in war. The hero had seen, in his rest, the mournful form of Agandecca. She came from the way of the ocean. She slowly, loneyl, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the mist of Cromla. Dark were the tears of her cheek. She often raised her dim hand from her robe: her robe which was of the clouds of the

desert; she raised her dim hand over Fingal, and turned away her silent eyes! "Why weeps the daughter of Starno?" said Fingal with a sigh; "why is thy face so pale, fair wanderer of the clouds?" She departed on the wind of Lena.* She left him in the midst of the night. She mourned the sons of her people, that were to fall by the hand of Fingal.

The hero started from rest. Still he beheld her in his soul. The sound of Oscar's steps approached. The king saw the grey shield on his side: For the faint beam of the morning came over the waters of Ullin. "What do the foes in their fear?" said the rising king of Morven; "or fly they through ocean's foam, or wait they the battle of steel? But why should Fingal ask? I hear their voice on the early wind! Fly over Lena's heath: O Oscar, awake our friends!"

The king stood by the stone of Lubar.† Thrice he reared his terrible voice. The deer started from the fountains of Cromla. The rocks shook on all their hills. Like the noise of a hundred mountain-streams, that burst, and roar, and foam! like the clouds, that gather to a tempest on the blue face of

* It is remarkable, and also a proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the Poems, that Ossian generally draws his similes from objects around him—the fair spirit moved over Lena—pale as the mist of *Cromla,* and departed on the winds of *Lena. C.*

† The many large monumental stones in the neighbourhood of Lubar, and on the heath of Lena, are further proofs of the authenticity of Ossian—Go, ye incredulous, visit them, and be convinced. *C.*

the sky! so met the sons of the desert, round the terrible voice of Fingal. Pleasant was the voice of the king of Morven to the warriors of his land. Often had he led them to battle; often returned with the spoils of the foe!

"Come to battle," said the king, "ye children of echoing Selma! Come to the death of thousands. Comhal's son will see the fight. My sword shall wave on the hill the defence of my people in war. But never may you need it, warriors: while the son of Morni fights, the chief of mighty men! He shall lead my battle; that his fame may rise in song! O ye ghosts of heroes dead! ye riders of the storm of Cromla! receive my falling people with joy, and bear them to your hills. And may the blast of Lena carry them over my seas, that they may come to my silent dreams, and delight my soul in rest! Fillan and Oscar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed steel! advance with valour to the fight. Behold the son of Morni! Let your swords be like his in strife: behold the deeds of his hands. Protect the friends of your father. Remember the chiefs of old. My children, I will see you yet, though here you should fall in Erin. Soon shall our cold, pale ghosts meet in a cloud on Cona's eddying winds!"

Now like a dark and stormy cloud, edged round with the red lightning of heaven; flying westward from the morning's beam, the king of Selma removed. Terrible is the light of his armour; two spears are in his hand. His grey hair falls on the wind. He often looks back on the war. Three

bards attend the son of fame, to bear his words to the chiefs. High on Cromla's side he sat, waving the lightning of his sword, and as he waved we moved.

Joy rises in Oscar's face. His cheek is red. His eye sheds tears. The sword is a beam of fire in his hand. He came, and smiling, spoke to Ossian. "O ruler of the fight of steel! my father, hear thy son! Retire with Morven's mighty chief. Give me the fame of Ossian. If here I fall: O chief, remember that breast of snow, the lonely sun-beam of my love, the white-handed daughter of Toscar! For, with red cheek from the rock, bending over the stream, her soft hair flies about her bosom, as she pours the sigh for Oscar. Tell her I am on my hills, a lightly-bounding son of the wind; tell her, that in a cloud, I may meet the lovely maid of Toscar." "Raise, Oscar, rather raise my tomb. I will not yield the war to thee. The first and bloodiest in the strife, my arm shall teach thee how to fight. But, remember, my son, to place this sword, this bow, the horn of my deer, within that dark and narrow house, whose mark is one grey stone! Oscar, I have no love to leave to the care of my son. Everallin is no more, the lovely daughter of Branno!"

Such were our words, when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the sword of his father. We rushed to death and wounds. As waves, white-bubbling over the deep, come swelling, roaring on; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves; so foes attacked and fought. Man met with man, and steel with steel. Shields sound,

and warriors fall. As a hundred hammers on the red son of the furnace, so rose, so rung their swords!

Gaul rushed on, like a whirlwind in Ardven. The destruction of heroes is on his sword. Swaran was like the fire of the desert in the echoing heath of Gormal! How can I give to the song the death of many spears? My sword rose high, and flamed in the strife of blood. Oscar, terrible wert thou, my best, my greatest son! I rejoiced in my secret soul, when his sword flamed over the slain. They fled amain through Lena's heath. We pursued and slew. As stones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder rolls from hill to hill, in dismal broken peals; so blow succeeded to blow, and death to death, from the hands of Oscar and Ossian.

But Swaran closed round Morni's son, as the strength of the tide of Inistore. The king half-rose from his hill at the sight. He half-assumed the spear. "Go, Ullin,* go, my aged bard," begun the king of Morven. "Remind the mighty Gaul of war. Remind him of his fathers. Support the yielding fight with song; for song enlivens war." Tall Ullin went, with step of age, and spoke to the king of swords. "Son† of the chief of generous

* This Ullin—Ulster—was the Chief Bard of the Royal House of Ulster, Temora,—Connor—and accompanied Fingal in all his battles in Ireland. *C.*

† The custom of encouraging men in battle with extempore rhymes, has been carried down almost to our own times. Several of these war songs are extant, but the most of them are only a group of epithets, without either beauty or harmony, utterly destitute of poetical merit.

steeds! high-bounding king of spears. Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white sail bound round dark Inistore. Be thine arm like thunder, thine eyes like fire, thy heart of solid rock. Whirl round thy sword as a meteor at night; lift thy shield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous steeds, cut down the foe. Destroy!" The hero's heart beat high. But Swaran came with battle. He cleft the shield of Gaul in twain. The sons of Selma fled.

Fingal at once arose in arms. Thrice he reared his dreadful voice. Cromla answered around.* The sons of the desert stood still. They bent their blushing faces to earth, ashamed at the presence of the king. He came, like a cloud of rain in the day of the sun, when slow it rolls on the hill, and fields expect the shower. Silence attends its slow progress aloft; but the tempest is soon to arise. Swaran beheld the terrible king of Morven. He stopped in the midst of his course. Dark he leaned on his spear, rolling his red eyes around. Silent and tall he seemed as an oak on the banks of Lubar, which had its branches blasted of old by the lightning of heaven. It bends over the stream: the grey moss whistles in the wind: so stood the king. Then slowly he retired to the rising heath of Lena. His thousands pour around the hero. Darkness gathers on the hill!

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, shone in the

* The armies must have been near the cave-hill—Cromla,—to enable the voice of Fingal to echo through its rocks. *C.*

midst of his people. His heroes gather around him. He sends forth the voice of his power. "Raise my standards on high; spread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills! Let them sound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye sons of the roaring streams, that pour from a thousand hills, be near the king of Morven! attend to the words of his power! Gaul, strongest arm of death! O Oscar, of the future fights! Connal, son of the blue shields of Sora! Dermid of the dark-brown hair! Ossian, king of many songs, be near your father's arm!" We reared the sun-beam* of battle; the standard of the king! Each hero exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew on the wind. It was studded with gold above, as the blue wide shell of the nightly sky. Each hero had his standard too; and each his gloomy men!

"Behold," said the king of generous shells, "how Lochlin divides on Lena! They stand like broken clouds on a hill; or an half consumed grove of oaks; when we see the sky through its branches, and the meteor passing behind! Let every chief among the friends of Fingal take a dark troop of those that frown so high: Nor let a son of the echoing groves bound on the waves of Inistore!"

"Mine," said Gaul, "be the seven chiefs, that came from Lano's lake." "Let Inistore's dark king," said Oscar, "come to the sword of Ossian's son."

* Fingal's standard was distinguished by the name of *sun-beam*; probably on account of its bright colour, and its being studded with gold. To begin a battle is expressed, in old composition, by *lifting of the sun beam.*

"To mine the king of Iniscon," said Connal, "heart of steel!" "Or Mudan's chief or I," said brown-haired Dermid,* "shall sleep on clay-cold earth." My choice, though now so weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promised with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown shield. "Blest and victorious be my chiefs," said Fingal of the mildest look. "Swaran, king of roaring waves thou art the choice of Fingal!"

Now, like an hundred different winds, that pour through many vales; divided, dark the sons of Selma advanced. Cromla echoed around! "How can I relate the deaths, when we closed in the strife of arms! O daughter of Toscar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell, like the banks of the roaring Cona! Our arms were victorious on *Lena*: each chief fulfilled his promise! Beside the murmur of Branno thou didst often sit, O maid! thy white bosom rose frequent, like the down of the swan when slow she swims on the lake, and sidelong winds blow on her ruffled wing. Thou hast seen the sun retire, red and slow behind his cloud: night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blast roared in the narrow vales. At length the rain beats hard: thunder rolls in peals. Lightning glances on the rocks! Spirits ride on beams of fire! The strength of the mountain-streams comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noise of battle, maid of the arms of snow!

* This Dermid, one of the sons of Fingal, is the *traditional* ancestor of the clan—Campbells of Argyle. C.

Why, daughter of Toscar, why that tear? The maids of Lochlin have cause to weep! The people of their country fell. Bloody were the blue swords of the race of my heroes! But I am sad, forlorn, and blind: no more the companion of heroes! Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears. I have seen the tombs of all my friends!"

It was then, by Fingal's hand, a hero fell, to his grief! Grey-haired he rolled in the dust. He lifted his faint eyes to the king: "And is it by me thou hast fallen," said the son of Comhal, "thou friend of Agandecca! I have seen thy tears for the maid of my love in the halls of the bloody Starno! Thou hast been the foe of the foes of my love, and hast thou fallen by my hand? Raise, *Ullin*, raise the grave of Mathon; and give his name to Agandecca's song. Dear to my soul hast thou been, thou darkly-dwelling maid of Ardven!"

Cuthullin, from the cave of Cromla, heard the noise of the troubled war.* He called to Connal chief of swords; to Carril of other times. The grey-haired heroes heard his voice. They took their pointed spears. They came, and saw the tide of battle, like ocean's crowded waves: when the dark wind blows from the deep, and rolls the billows through the sandy vale! Cuthullin kindled at the sight. Darkness gathered on his brow. His hand

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* In the south side of the Cave-hill, which is very like the rock of Gibraltar, but more lofty, there are some beautiful Caves—I have visited two of them—the third and highest, from the craggy side of *Cromla*, having given way, is now unapproachable. Warriors or Druids have dwelt here. C.

is on the sword of his fathers: his red rolling eyes on the foe. He thrice attempted to rush to battle. He thrice was stopt by Connal. "Chief of the isle of mist," he said, "Fingal subdues the foe. Seek not a part of the fame of the king; he himself is like the storm!"

"Then, Carril, go," replied the chief, "go, greet the king of Morven. When Lochlin falls away like a stream after rain: when the noise of the battle is past. Then be thy voice sweet in his ear to praise the king of Selma! Give him the sword of Caithbat. Cuthullin is not worthy to lift the arms of his fathers! Come, O ye ghosts of the lonely Cromla! ye souls of chiefs that are no more! be near the steps of Cuthullin; talk to him in the cave of his grief. Never more shall I be renowned, among the mighty in the land. I am a beam that has shone; a mist that has fled away: when the blast of the morning came, and brightened the shaggy side of the hill: Connal! talk of arms no more: departed is my fame. My sighs shall be on *Cromla's* wind; till my footsteps cease to be seen. And thou, white-bosomed Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame: vanquished, I will never return to thee, thou sunbeam of my soul!"

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK V

Cuthullin and Connal still remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is described. Swaran is overcome, bound and delivered over as a prisoner to the care of Ossian, and Gaul the son of Morni; Fingal, his younger sons, and Oscar, still pursue the enemy. The episode of Orla, a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the pursuit to be discontinued; and calling his sons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngest of them, was slain. He laments his death, hears the story of Lamderg and Gelchossa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had been sent by Cuthullin to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Ossian. The conversation of the two poets closes the action of the fourth day.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK V.

ON Cromla's resounding side, Connal spoke to the chief of the noble car. Why that gloom, son of Semo? Our friends are the mighty in fight. Renowned art thou, O warrior! many were the deaths of thy steel. Often has Bragela met, with blue-rolling eyes of joy: often has she met her hero, returning in the midst of the valiant; when his sword was red with slaughter; when his foes were silent in the fields of the tomb. Pleasant to her ears were thy bards, when thy deeds arose in song.

But behold the king of Morven! He moves, below, like a pillar of fire.* His strength is like the stream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy forests of night are torn from all their rocks! Happy are thy people, O Fingal! thine arm shall finish their wars. Thou

* The Lubar—Six-mile water,—is the largest stream near Cromla—Cave-hill,—and runs through the heath of Lena, at the south foot of the hill Mora,—it flows into Lochneagh,—the lake of roes of Ossian! Vide the Map. *C.*

art the first in their dangers; the wisest in the days of their peace. Thou speakest, and thy thousands obey: armies tremble at the sound of thy steel. Happy are thy people, O Fingal! king of resounding Selma! Who is that so dark and terrible coming in the thunder of his course? who but Starno's son to meet the king of Morven? Behold the battle of the chiefs! It is the storm of the ocean, when two spirits meet far distant, and contend for the rolling of waves. The hunter hears the noise on his hill. He sees the high billows advancing to Ardven's shore!

Such were the words of Connal when the heroes met in fight. There was the clang of arms! there every blow like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings; dreadful the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown shields are cleft in twain. Their steel flies, broken, from their helms. They fling their weapons down. Each rushes to his hero's grasp: their sinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from side to side, and strain and stretch their large spreading limbs below. But when the pride of their strength arose, they shook the hill with their heels. Rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed bushes are overturned. At length the strength of Swaran fell; the king of the groves is bound. Thus have I seen on Cona; but Cona I behold no more! thus have I seen two dark hills, removed from their place, by the strength of the bursting stream. They turn from side to side in their fall; their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they tumble together

with all their rocks and trees. The streams are turned by their side. The red ruin is seen afar.

"Sons of distant Morven," said Fingal; "guard the king of Lochlin! he is strong as his thousand waves. His hand is taught to war. His race is of the times of old. Gaul, thou first of my heroes; Ossian, king of songs, attend. He is the friend o Agandecca; raise to joy his grief. But, Oscar, Fillan, and Ryno, ye children of the race! pursue Lochlin over Lena; that no vessel may hereafter bound, on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore!"

They flew sudden across the heath. He slowly moved, like a cloud of thunder, when the sultry plain of summer is silent and dark; his sword is before him as a sun-beam; terrible as the streaming meteor of night. He came toward a chief of Lochlin. He spoke to the son of the wave. "Who is that so dark and sad, at the rock of the roaring stream? He cannot bound over its course: How stately is the chief! his bossy shield is on his side; his spear like the tree of the desert! Youth of the dark-red hair, art thou of the foes of Fingal?"

"I am a son of Lochlin," he cries, "strong is my arm in war. My spouse is weeping at home. Orla shall never return!" "Or fights or yields the hero?" said Fingal of the noble deeds; "Foes do not conquer in my presence: my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave, follow me, partake the feast of my shells: pursue the deer of my desert: be thou the friend of Fingal."

said the hero, "I assist the feeble. My strength is with the weak in arms. My sword has been always

unmatched, O warrior! let the king of Morven yield!" "I never yielded, Orla! Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy sword, and chuse thy foe. Many are my heroes!"

"Does then the king refuse the fight?" said Orla of the dark-brown shield. "Fingal is a match for Orla; and he alone of all his race!" "But king of Morven, if I shall fall; as one time the warrior must die; raise my tomb in the midst: let it be the greatest on Lena. Send, over the dark-blue wave, the sword of Orla to the spouse of his love; that she may shew it to her son, with tears, to kindle his soul to war." "Son of the mournful tale," said Fingal, "why dost thou awaken my tears? One day the warriors must die, and the children see their useless arms in the hall. But, Orla! thy tomb shall rise. Thy white-bosomed spouse shall weep over thy sword."

They fought on the heath of Lena. Feeble was the arm of Orla. The sword of Fingal descended, and cleft his shield in twain. It fell and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the ruffled stream. "King of Morven," said the hero, "lift thy sword and pierce my breast. Wounded and faint from battle, my friends have left me here. The mournful tale shall come to my love on the banks of the streamy Lota; when she is alone in the wood; and the rustling blast in the leaves!"

"No!" said the king of Morven, "I will never wound thee, Orla. On the banks of Lota let her see thee, escaped from the hands of war. Let thy grey-haired father, who, perhaps, is blind with age,

Let him hear the sound of thy voice, and brighten within his hall. With joy let the hero rise, and search for his son with his hands!" "But never will he find him, Fingal;" said the youth of the streamy Lota. "On Lena's heath I must die; foreign bards shall talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. I give it to the wind!"

The dark blood poured from his side, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bent over him as he dies, and called his younger chiefs. "Oscar and Fillan, my sons, raise high the memory of Orla. Here let the dark-haired hero rest, far from the spouse of his love. Here let him rest in his narrow house, far from the sound of Lota. The feeble will find his bow at home; but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills; his boars, which he used to pursue, rejoice. Fallen is the arm of battle! the mighty among the valiant is low! Exalt the voice, and blow the horn, ye sons of the king of Morven! Let us go back to Swaran, to send the night away on song. Fillan, Oscar, and Ryno, fly over the heath of Lena. Where, Ryno, art thou, young son of fame? Thou art not wont to be the last to answer thy father's voice!"

"Ryno," said Ullin, first of bards, "is with the awful forms of his fathers. With Trathal king of shields; with Trenmor of mighty deeds. The youth is low, the youth is pale, he lies on Lena's heath!" "Fell the swiftest in the race," said the king, "the first to bend the bow? Thou scarce hast been known to me! why did young Ryno fall? But sleep thou softly on *Lena*. Fingal shall soon behold

thee. Soon shall my voice be heard no more, and my footsteps cease to be seen. The bards will tell of Fingal's name. The stones will talk of me. But, Ryno, thou art low indeed! thou hast not received thy fame. *Ullin,* strike the harp for Ryno; tell what the chief would have been. Farewel, thou first in every field! No more shall I direct thy dart! Thou that hast been so fair! I behold thee not. Farewel." The tear is on the cheek of the king, for terrible was his son in war. His son! that was like a beam of fire by night on a hill; when the forests sink down in its course, and the traveller trembles at the sound! But the winds drive it beyond the steep. It sinks from sight, and darkness prevails.

"Whose fame is in that dark-green tomb?" begun the king of generous shells; four stones with their heads of moss stand there! They mark the narrow house of death. Near it let Ryno rest. A neighbour to the brave let him lie. Some chief of fame is here, to fly, with my son, on clouds. O *Ullin!* raise the songs of old. Awake their memory in their tomb. If in the field they never fled, my son shall rest by their side. He shall rest, far distant from *Morven*, on *Lena's* resounding plains!"

"Here," said the bard of song, "here rest the first of heroes. Silent is Lamderg* in this place: dumb is Ullin king of swords: And who, soft smiling from her cloud, shews me her face of love?

* Lamh-dhearg signifies *bloody hand.* Gelchossa, *white legged.* Tuathal, *surly.* Ulfadda, *long beard.* Ferchios, *the conqueror of men*

Why, daughter, why so pale art thou, first of the maids of Cromla? Dost thou sleep with the foes in battle, white-bosomed daughter of Tuathal? Thou hast been the love of thousands, but Lamderg was thy love. He came to Selma's mossy towers, and, striking his dark buckler, spoke:" "Where is Gelchossa, my love, the daughter of the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Selma, when I fought with great Ulfada. 'Return soon, O Lamderg!' she said, 'for here I sit in grief.' Her white breast rose with sighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I see her not coming to meet me; to sooth my soul after war. Silent is the hall of my joy! I hear not the voice of the bard. Bran* does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of Lamderg. Where is Gelchossa, my love, the mild daughter of the generous Tuathal?"

"Lamderg!" says Ferchios son of Aidon, "Gelchossa moves stately on Cromla. She and the maids of the bow pursue the flying deer!" "Ferchios!" replied the chief of Cromla, "no noise meets the ear of Lamderg! No sound is in the woods of Lena. No deer fly in my sight. No panting dog pursues. I see not Gelchossa, my love, fair as the full moon setting on the hills. Go, Ferchios, go to Allad,† the grey-haired son of the rock. His dwell-

* Bran is a comm[illegible] name of grey-hounds to this day. It is a custom in the no[illegible] [illegible] Scotland, to give the names of the heroes mentioned i[illegible] [illegible]oem, to the[illegible] [illegible]ogs; a [illegible]roof that they are familiar to t[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]k[illegible]wn.

† Allad is a drui[illegible] [illegible] his dwelling in a cave: [illegible] [illegible]ned

ing is in the circle of stones. He may know of the bright Gelchossa!"

"The son of Aidon went. He spoke to the ear of age. Allad! dweller of rocks: thou that tremblest alone! what saw thine eyes of age?" "I saw," answered Allad the old, "Ullin the son of Cairbar. He came, in darkness, from Cromla. He hummed a surly song, like a blast in a leafless wood. He entered the hall of Selma. "Lamderg," he said, "most dreadful of men, fight, or yield to Ullin." "Lamderg," replied Gelchossa, "the son of battle, is not here. He fights Ulfada mighty chief. He is not here, thou first of men! But Lamderg never yields. He will fight the son of Cairbar!" "Lovely art thou," said terrible Ullin, "daughter of the generous Tuathal. I carry thee to Cairbar's halls. The valiant shall have Gelchossa. Three days I remain on Cromla, to wait that son of battle, Lamberg. On the fourth Gelchossa is mine; if the mighty Lamderg flies."

"Allad!" said the chief of Cromla, "peace to thy dreams in the cave. Ferchios, sound the horn of Lamderg, that Ullin may hear in his halls." Lamderg, like a roaring storm, ascended the hill from Selma. He hummed a surly song as he went, like the noise of a falling stream. He darkly stood upon the hill, like a cloud varying its form to the wind. He rolled a stone, the sign of war. Ullin

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is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here consulted as one who had a supernatural knowledge of things. From the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the second sight, which prevailed in the highlands and isles.

heard in Cairbar's hall. The hero heard, with joy, his foe. He took his father's spear. A smile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his sword by his side. The dagger glittered in his hand. He whistled as he went.

Gelchossa saw the silent chief, as a wreath of mist ascending the hill. She struck her white and heaving breast; and silent, tearful, feared for Lamderg. "Cairbar, hoary chief of shells," said the maid of the tender hand, "I must bend the bow on Cromla. I see the dark-brown hinds!" She hasted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought. Why should I tell to Selma's king, how wrathful heroes fight? Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg came, all pale to the daughter of generous Tuathal! "What blood, my love?" she trembling said: "what blood runs down my warrior's side?" "It is Ullin's blood," the chief replied, "thou fairer than the snow! Gelchossa, let me rest here a little while." The mighty Lamderg died! "And sleepest thou so soon on earth, O chief of shady Selma?" Three days she mourned beside her love. The hunters found her cold. They raised this tomb above the three. Thy son, O king of Morven, may rest here with heroes!

"And here my son shall rest," said Fingal. "The voice of their fame is in mine ears. Fillan and Fergus! bring hither Orla; the pale youth of the stream of Lota! Not unequalled shall Ryno lie in earth, when Orla is by his side. Weep, ye daughters of Morven! ye maids of the streamy Lota, weep! Like a tree they grew on the hills. They

have fallen like the oak of the desert; when it lies across a stream, and withers in the wind. Oscar! chief of every youth! thou seest how they have fallen. Be thou like them, on earth renowned. Like them the song of bards. Terrible were their form, in battle; but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the shower seen far distant on the stream; when the sun is setting on Mora; when silence dwells on the hill of deer. Rest, youngest of my sons! rest, O Ryno! on Lena. We too shall be no more. Warriors one day must fall!"*

Such was thy grief, thou king of swords, when Ryno lay on earth. What must the grief of Ossian be, for thou thyself art gone! I hear not thy distant voice on Cona. My eyes perceive thee not. Often forlorn and dark I sit at thy tomb; and feel it with my hands. When I think I hear thy voice, it is but the passing blast. Fingal has long since fallen asleep, the ruler of the war!

Then Gaul and Ossian sat with Swaran, on the soft green banks of Lubar. I touched the harp to please the king. But gloomy was his brow. He rolled his red eyes towards Lena. The hero mourned his host. I raised mine eyes to Cromla's brow. I saw the son of generous Semo. Sad and slow, he retired, from his hill, towards the lonely cave of

* This beautiful, though mournful, tale or episode, is the composition of the Irish bard Ullin—Ulster—the friend of Fingal. It appears by this episode that whilst Lamderg fought with Ulfadda—chief of the O'Neills—his wife was carried off by Ullin, the son of Ulfadda. Ullin, or Ulster, was the title of the eldest son of the O'Neills, Kings of Ulster. *C.*

Tura. He saw Fingal victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The sun is bright on his armour. Connal slowly strode behind.* They sunk behind the hill, like two pillars of the fire of night: when winds pursue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath resounds! Beside a stream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it. The rushing winds echo against its sides. Here rests the chiefs of Erin, the son of generous Semo. His thoughts are on the battles he lost. The tear is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame, that fled like the mist of Cona. O Bragela! thou art too far remote, to cheer the soul of the hero. But let him see thy bright form in his mind: that his thoughts may return to the lonely sun-beam of his love!

Who comes with the locks of age? It is the son of songs. "Hail, Carril of other times! Thy voice is like the harp in the halls of Tura. Thy words are pleasant as the shower which falls on the sunny field. Carril of the times of old, why comest thou from the son of the generous Semo?"

"Ossian, king of swords," replied the bard, "thou best can raise the song. Long hast thou been known to Carril, thou ruler of war! Often have I touched the harp to lovely Everallin. Thou too hast often joined my voice, in Branno's hall of generous shells. And often, amidst our voices, was

* Having largely remarked on this passage in the geographical argument, I need scarcely call the reader's attention to its value—whether as a proof of my geographical system, or the noble and truly delicate mind of Ossian C.

heard the mildest Everallin. One day she sung of Cormac's fall, the youth who died for her love. I saw the tears on her cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men! Her soul was touched for the unhappy, though she loved him not. How fair among a thousand maids, was the daughter of generous Branno!"*

"'Bring not, Carril," I replied, "bring not her memory to my mind. My soul must melt at the remembrance. My eyes must have their tears. Pale in the earth is she, the softly-blushing fair of my love! But sit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. It is pleasant as the gale of spring,† that sighs on the hunter's ear; when he awakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the music of the spirits of the hill!"

* For the honour of Ireland I must here notice another Irish bard, many of whose delicate and beautiful effusions, as well as those of Ullin, are embodied with the poems of Ossian. To the lover of Celtic poetry I need scarcely name Carril—originally the family bard of Branno, the father of Everallin, latterly the friend and companion of Ossian. In meting out justice the scales should be balanced—many of the sticklers for Ossian will not allow Ireland the smallest of the beauties—*stat nominis umbra. C.*

† This beautiful compliment of Ossian was richly merited by Carril. *C.*

F I N G A L

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT TO BOOK VI.

Night comes on, Fingal gives a feast to his army, at which Swaran is present. The king commands Ullin his bard to give the *song of peace*; a custom always observed at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trenmor, great grandfather to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin, who was ancestor to Swaran; which consideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to release him and permit him to return with the remains of his army, into Lochlin, upon his promise of never returning to Ireland, in a hostile manner. The night is spent in settling Swaran's departure in songs of bards, and in a conversation in which the story of Grumal is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs; Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuthullin in the cave of Cromla, comforts him, and sets sail the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.

FINGAL:

AN

Epic Poem.

BOOK VI.

THE clouds of night come rolling down. Darkness rests on the steeps of Cromla. The stars of the north arise over the rolling of Erin's waves: they shew their heads of fire, through the flying mist of heaven. A distant wind roars in the wood. Silent and dark is the plain of death! Still on the dusky Lena arose in my ears the voice of Carril. He sung of the friends of our youth; the days of former years; when we met on the banks of the Lego: when we sent round the joy of the shell.* Cromla answered to his voice. The ghosts of those he sung came in their rustling winds. They were seen to bend with joy, towards the sound of their praise!†

Be thy soul blest, O Carril! in the midst of thy eddying winds. O that thou wouldst come to my

* At the Hall of Branno, near Lisburn, where Ossian married that chieftain's daughter, the beautiful Everallin, the mother of Oscar. *C.*

† This is another elegant compliment of the Gaellic bard to his Irish friend. *C.*

hall, when I am alone by night! And thou dost come, my friend. I hear often thy light hand on my harp; when it hangs, on the distant wall, and the feeble sound touches my ear. Why dost thou not speak to me in my grief, and tell when I shall behold my friends? But thou passest away in thy murmuring blast; the wind whistles through the grey hair of Ossian!

Now, on the side of Mora,* the heroes gathered to the feast. A thousand aged oaks are burning to the wind. The strength of the shells goes round. The souls of warriors brighten with joy. But the king of Lochlin is silent. Sorrow reddens in the eyes of his pride. He often turned towards Lena. He remembered that he fell. Fingal leaned on the shield of his fathers. His grey lock slowly waved on the wind, and glittered to the beam of night. He saw the grief of Swaran, and spoke to the first of bards.

"Raise, Ullin, raise the song of peace. O soothe my soul from war! Let mine ear forget, in the sound, the dismal noise of arms. Let a hundred harps be near to gladden the king of Lochlin. He must depart from us with joy. None ever went sad from Fingal. Oscar! the lightning of my sword is against the strong in fight. Peaceful it lies by my side when warriors yield in war."

* Here is a convincing proof of *Mora* being the little chain of high hills which bounds the Heath of Lena to the west—parallel with Cromla and Belfast Loch, the Legon river, &c.—at whose western foot stood *Temora*—now *Connor*. Of this more hereafter. C.

"Trenmor,"* said the mouth of songs, "lived in the days of other years. He bounded over the waves of the north: companion of the storm! The high rocks of the land of Lochlin; its groves of murmuring sounds appeared to the hero through mist; he bound his white-bosomed sails. Trenmor pursued the boar, that roared through the woods of Gormal. Many had fled from its presence: but it had rolled in death on the spear of Trenmor. Three chiefs, who beheld the deed, told of the mighty stranger. They told that he stood, like a pillar of fire, in the bright arms of his valour. The king of Lochlin prepared the feast. He called the blooming Trenmor. Three days he feasted at Gormal's windy towers; and received his choice in the combat. The land of Lochlin had no hero, that yielded not to Trenmor. The shell of joy went round with songs, in praise of the king of Morven. He that came over the waves, the first of mighty men!"

Now when the fourth grey morn arose, the hero launched his ship. He walked along the silent shore, and called for the rushing wind: For loud and distant he heard the blast murmuring behind the groves. Covered over with arms of steel, a son of the woody Gormal appeared. Red was his cheek and fair his hair. His skin like the snow of Morven. Mild rolled his blue and smiling eye, when he spoke to the king of swords.

"Stay, Trenmor, stay, thou first of men, thou hast not conquered Lonval's son. My sword has

* Trenmor was great grandfather to Fingal. The story is introduced to facilitate the dismission of Swaran.

often met the brave. The wise shun the strength of my bow." "Thou fair-haired youth," Trenmor replied, "I will not fight with Lonval's son. Thine arm is feeble, sun-beam of youth! Retire to Gormal's dark-brown hinds." "But I will retire," replied the youth, "with the sword of Trenmor; and exult in the sound of my fame. The virgins shall gather with smiles, around him who conquered mighty Trenmor. They shall sigh with the sighs of love, and admire the length of thy spear; when I shall carry it among thousands; when I lift the glittering point to the sun."

"Thou shalt never carry my spear," said the angry king of Morven. "Thy mother shall find thee pale on the shore; and, looking over the dark-blue deep, see the sails of him that slew her son!" "I will not lift the spear," replied the youth, "my arm is not strong with years. But, with the feathered dart, I have learned to pierce a distant foe. Throw down that heavy mail of steel. Trenmor is covered from death. I, first, will lay my mail on earth. Throw now thy dart, thou king of Morven!" He saw the heaving of her breast. It was the sister of the king. She had seen him in the hall: and loved his face of youth. The spear dropt from the hand of Trenmor: he bent his red cheek to the ground. She was to him a beam of light that meets the sons of the cave; when they revisit the fields of the sun, and bend their aching eyes!

"Chief of the windy Morven," begun the maid of the arms of snow, "let me rest in thy bounding ship, far from the love of Corlo. For he, like the

thunder of the desert, is terrible to Inibaca. He loves me in the gloom of pride. He shakes ten thousand spears!" "Rest thou in peace," said the mighty Trenmor, "rest behind the shield of my fathers. I will not fly from the chief, though he shakes ten thousand spears!" Three days he waited on the shore. He sent his horn abroad. He called Corlo to battle, from all his echoing hills. But Corlo came not to battle. The king of Lochlin descends from his hall. He feasted on the roaring shore. He gave the maid to. Trenmor!

"King of Lochlin," said Fingal, "thy blood flows in the veins of thy foe. Our fathers met in battle, because they loved the strife of spears. But often did they feast in the hall: and send round the joy of the shell. Let thy face brighten with gladness, and thine ear delight in the harp. Dreadful as the storm of thine ocean, thou hast poured thy valour forth; thy voice has been like the voice of thousands when they engage in war. Raise, to-morrow, raise thy white sails to the wind, thou brother of Agandecca! Bright as the beam of noon, she comes on my mournful soul. I have seen thy tears for the fair one. I spared thee in the halls of Starno; when my sword was red with slaughter; when my eye was full of tears for the maid. Or dost thou chuse the fight? The combat which thy fathers gave to Trenmor is thine! that thou mayest depart renowned, like the sun setting in the west!"

"King of the race of Morven!" said the chief of resounding Lochlin, "never will Swaran fight with thee, first of a thousand heroes! I have seen

thee in the halls of Starno: few were thy years beyond my own. When shall I, I said to my soul, lift the spear like the noble Fingal? We have fought heretofore, O warrior, on the side of the shaggy Malmor; after my waves had carried me to thy halls, and the feast of a thousand shells was spread. Let the bards send his name who overcame to future years, for noble was the strife of Malmor! But many of the ships of Lochlin have lost their youths on Lena. Take these, thou king of Morven, and be the friend of Swaran! When thy sons shall come to Gormal, the feast of shells shall be spread, and the combat offered on the vale."

"Nor ship," replied the king, "shall Fingal take, nor land of many hills. The desert is enough to me, with all its deer and woods. Rise on thy waves again, thou noble friend of Agandecca! Spread thy white sails to the beam of the morning; return to the echoing hills of Gormal." "Blest be thy soul, thou king of shells," said Swaran of the dark-brown shield. "In peace thou art the gale of spring. In war the mountain-storm. Take now my hand in friendship, king of echoing Selma! Let thy bards mourn those who fell. Let Erin give the sons of Lochlin to earth. Raise high the mossy stones of their fame: that the children of the north hereafter may behold the place where their fathers fought. The hunter may say, when he leans on a *mossy tomb*, here Fingal and Swaran fought, the heroes of

other years. Thus hereafter shall he say, and our fame shall last for ever!"*

"Swaran," said the king of hills, "to-day our fame is greatest. We shall pass away like a dream. No sound will remain in our fields of war. Our tombs will be lost in the heath. The hunter shall not know the place of our rest. Our names may be heard in song. What avails it when our strength hath ceased? O, *Ossian*, *Carril*, and *Ullin!* you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the song of other years. Let the night pass away on the sound, and morning return with joy."

We gave the song to the kings. An hundred harps mixed their sound with our voice. The face of Swaran brightened, like the full moon of heaven; when the clouds vanish away, and leave her calm and broad in the midst of the sky!

"Where, Carril," said the great Fingal, "Carril of other times! Where is the son of Semo, the king of the *isle of mist?* has he retired like the meteor of death, to the dreary *cave of Cromla?*"†

"Cuthullin," said Carril of other times! "lies in the dreary cave of Cromla. His hand is on the sword of his strength. His thoughts on the battles

* This noble reply was fondly alive in my memory, whilst walking among the ancient tumuli, Cairns, and stones on the heath of *Lena. C.*

† May not this allude to one of the Caves, in the face of the Cave-Hill—Cromla? I am almost borne out in the reality of the conjecture, when I recollect that Cuthullin's army was always stationed on the *heath* of *Lena*, in the neighbourhood of Cromla, to guard the Capital. Temora! *C.*

he lost. Mournful is the king of spears; till now unconquered in war He sends his sword to rest on the side of Fingal: For, like the storm of the desert, thou hast scattered all his foes. Take, O Fingal! the sword of the hero. His fame is departed like mist, when it flies, before the rustling wind, along the brightening vale."

"No:" replied the king, "Fingal shall never take his sword. His arm is mighty in war: his fame shall never fail. Many have been overcome in battle; whose renown arose from their fall. O Swaran! king of resounding woods, give all thy grief away. The vanquished, if brave, are renowned. They are like the sun in a cloud, when he hides his face in the south, but looks again on the hills of grass!

"Grumal was a chief of Cona. He sought the battle on every coast. His soul rejoiced in blood; his ear in the din of arms. He poured his warriors on Craca; Craca's king met him from his grove: for then, within the circle of Brumo,* he spoke to the stone of power. Fierce was the battle of the heroes, for the maid of the breast of snow. The fame of the daughter of Craca had reached Grumal at the streams of Cona: he vowed to have the white-bosomed maid, or die on echoing Craca. Three days they strove together, and Grumal on the fourth was bound. Far from his friends they placed him in the horrid circle of Brumo; where often, they said, the ghosts of the dead howled round

* This passage alludes to the religion of the king of Craca.

the stone of their fear. But he afterwards shone like a pillar of the light of heaven. They fell by his mighty hand. Grumal had all his fame!"

"Raise, ye bards of other times," continued the great Fingal, "raise high the praise of heroes: that my soul may settle on their fame; that the mind of Swaran may cease to be sad." They lay in the heath of Mora. The dark winds rustled over the chiefs. A hundred voices, at once, arose: a hundred harps were strung. They sung of other times; the mighty chiefs of former years! When now shall I hear the bard? When rejoice at the fame of my fathers? The harp is not strung on Morven. The voice of music ascends not on Cona. Dead, with the mighty, is the bard. Fame is in the desert no more.

Morning trembles with the beam of the east; it glimmers on *Cromla's* side. Over *Lena* is heard the horn of Swaran. The sons of the ocean gather around. Silent and sad they rise on the wave. The blast of Erin is behind their sails. White, as the mist of Morven, they float along the sea. "Call," said Fingal, "call my dogs, the long-bounding sons of the chase. Call white-breasted Bran, and the surly strength of Luath! Fillan, and Ryno; but he is not here! My son rests on the bed of death. Fillan and Fergus! blow the horn, that the joy of the chase may arise: that the deer of Cromla may hear and start at the lake of roes."*

* The *lake of Roes* is evidently Lochneagh, whose north east end is bounded by a part of the ridge of Lena. *Vide Geog. Argument.* C.

The shrill sound spreads along the wood. The sons of heathy Cromla arise. A thousand dogs fly off at once, grey-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by every dog; three by the white-breasted Bran. He brought them, in their flight, to Fingal, that the joy of the king might be great! One deer fell at the tomb of Ryno. The grief of Fingal returned. He saw how peaceful lay the stone of him, who was the first at the chase! "No more shalt thou rise, O my son! to partake of the feast of Cromla. Soon will thy tomb be hid, and the grass grow rank on thy grave. The sons of the feeble shall pass along. They shall not know where the mighty lie.

"Ossian and Fillan, sons of my strength! Gaul, chief of the blue steel of war! let us ascend the hill to the *cave of Cromla*. Let us find the chief of the battles of Erin. Are these the walls of Tura? grey and lonely they rise on the heath. The chief of shells is sad, and the halls are silent and lonely. Come, let us find Cuthullin, and give him all our joy. But is that Cuthullin, O Fillan, or a pillar of smoke on the heath? The wind of Cromla is on my eyes. I distinguish not my friend."

"Fingal!" replied the youth, "it is the son of Semo! Gloomy and sad is the hero! his hand is on his sword. Hail to the son of battle, breaker of the shields!" "Hail to thee," replied Cuthullin, "hail to all the sons of Morven! Delightful is thy presence, O Fingal! it is the sun on Cromla; when the hunter mourns his absence for a season, and sees him between the clouds. Thy sons are like

stars that attend thy course. They give light in the night. It is not thus thou hast seen me, O Fingal! returning from the wars of thy land: when the kings of the world* had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds! "Many are thy words, Cuthullin," said Connan† of small renown. "Thy words are many, son of Semo, but where are thy deeds in arms? Why did we come, over ocean, to aid thy feeble sword? Thou fliest to thy cave of grief, and Connan fights thy battles. Resign to me these arms of light. Yield them, thou chief of Erin." "No hero," replied the chief, "ever sought the arms of Cuthullin! and had a thousand heroes sought them, it were in vain, thou gloomy youth! I fled not to the cave of grief, till Erin failed at her streams."

"Youth of the feeble arm," said Fingal, "Connan, cease thy words! Cuthullin is renowned in battle; terrible over the world. Often have I heard thy fame, thou stormy chief of Inis-fail. Spread now thy white sails for the isle of mist. See Bragela leaning on her rock. Her tender eye is in tears; the wind lifts her long hair from her heaving breast. She listens to breezes of night, to hear the

* This is the only passage in the poem wherein the wars of Fingal against the Romans are alluded to: the Roman emperor is distinguished in old compositions by the title of *king of the world.*

† Connan was of the family of Morni. He is mentioned in several other poems, and always appears with the same character. The poet passed him over in silence till now, and his behaviour here deserves no better usage.

voice of thy rowers;* to hear the song of the sea! the sound of thy distant harp!"

"Long shall she listen in vain. Cuthullin shall never return! How can I behold Bragela, to raise the sigh of her breast? Fingal, I was always victorious, in battles of other spears!" "And hereafter thou shalt be victorious," said Fingal, of generous shells. "The fame of Cuthullin shall grow, like the branchy tree of Cromla.† Many battles await thee, O chief! Many shall be the wounds of thy hand! Bring hither, Oscar, the deer! Prepare the feast of shells. Let our souls rejoice after danger, and our friends delight in our presence!"

We sat. We feasted. We sung. The soul of Cuthullin rose. The strength of his arm returned. Gladness brightened along his face. Ullin gave the song; Carril raised the voice. I joined the bards, and sung of battles of the spear. Battles! where I often fought. Now I fight no more! The fame of my former deeds is ceased. I sit forlorn at the tombs of my friends!

Thus the night passed away in song. We brought back the morning with joy. Fingal arose on the heath, and shook his glittering spear. He moved first towards the plains of Lena.‡ We followed in all our arms.

* The practice of singing when they row is universal among the inhabitants of the north-west coast of Scotland and the isles It deceives time, and inspirits the rowers.

† Vide the Geog. Argument. C.

‡ I understand that Fingal was on the side of *Mora*, beyond

"Spread the sail," said the king, "seize the winds as they pour from Lena."* We rose on the wave with songs. We rushed, with joy, through the foam of the deep.

the *Lubar*, consequently, it was necessary to "move towards the plain of *Lena*," over which he had to pass to embark.

* The winds which poured from Lena were the winds necessary to waft Fingal to Morven. *C.*

LATHMON:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Lathmon, a British prince, taking advantage of Fingal's absence on an expedition in Ireland, made a descent on Morven, and advanced within sight of Selma,* the royal residence. Fingal arrived in the mean time, and Lathmon retreated to a hill, where his army was surprized by night, and himself taken prisoner by Ossian, and Gaul the son of Morni. The poem opens, with the first appearance of Fingal on the coast of Morven, and ends, it may be supposed, about noon the next day.

* Sela—math, or Selma—means—*beautiful to behold*. Hence it does not make against my Geographical Argument, that there should be two places—one in Ulster, and one in Argyleshire, of that name, as it is but natural to imagine, that the residence of the Chief should be one of the most beautiful places to behold in his territory.

Ulster could supply more places than Morven, deserving the appellation. C.

LATHMON:

A

Poem.

SELMA, thy halls are silent. There is no sound in the woods of Morven. The wave tumbles alone on the coast. The silent beam of the sun is on the field. The daughters of Morven come forth, like the bow of the shower; they look towards green Erin for the white sails of the king. He had promised to return, but the winds of the north arose!

Who pours from the eastern hill, like a stream of darkness? It is the host of Lathmon. He has heard of the absence of Fingal. He trusts in the wind of the north. His soul brightens with joy Why dost thou come, O Lathmon? The mighty are not in Selma. Why comest thou with thy forward spear? Will the daughters of Morven fight? But stop, O mighty stream, in thy course! Does not Lathmon behold these sails? Why dost thou vanish, Lathmon, like the mist of the lake? But the squally storm is behind thee; Fingal pursues thy steps!

The king of Morven had started from sleep, as we rolled on the dark-blue wave. He stretched

his hand to his spear, his heroes rose around. We knew that he had seen his fathers, for they often descended to his dreams, when the sword of the foe rose over the land; and the battle darkened before us. "Whither hast thou fled, O wind!" said the king of Morven. "Dost thou rustle in the chambers of the south, pursuest thou the shower in other lands? Why dost thou not come to my sails? to the blue face of my seas? The foe is in the land of Morven, and the king is absent far. But let each bind on his mail, and each assume his shield. Stretch every spear over the wave; let every sword be unsheathed. Lathmon* is before us with his host: he that fled† from Fingal on the plains of Lona. But he returns, like a collected stream, and his roar is between our hills."

Such were the words of Fingal. We rushed into Carmona's bay.‡ Ossian ascended the hill: He thrice struck his bossy shield. The rock of Morven replied: the bounding roes came forth. The foe was troubled in my presence: he collected his darkened host. I stood, like a cloud on the hill, rejoicing in the arms of my youth.

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* It is said by tradition, that it was the intelligence of Lathmon's invasion, that occasioned Fingal's return from Ireland; though Ossian, more poetically, ascribes the cause of Fingal's knowledge to his dream.

† He alludes to a battle wherein Fingal had defeated Lathmon.

‡ Here there is evidently the loss or omission of a fragment of the Poem, which should describe the embarkation and passage from *Carmona's Bay*—near Carrickfergus—to Morven, on the opposite shore! *C.*

Morni* sat beneath a tree, at the roaring waters of Stramon:† his locks of age are grey: he leans forward on his staff; young Gaul is near the hero, hearing the battles of his father. Often did he rise, in the fire of his soul, at the mighty deeds of Morni. The aged heard the sound of Ossian's shield: he knew the sign of war. He started at once from his place. His grey hair parted on his back. He remembered the deeds of other years.

"My son," he said to fair-haired Gaul, "I hear the sound of war. The king of Morven is returned, his signals are spread on the wind. Go to the halls of Strumon; bring his arms to Morni. Bring the shield of my father's latter years, for my arm begins to fail. Take thou thy armour, O Gaul! and rush to the first of thy battles. Let thine arm reach to the renown of thy fathers. Be thy course in the field, like the eagle's wing. Why shouldst thou fear death, my son? the valiant fall with fame; their shields turn the dark stream of danger away; renown dwells on their aged hairs. Dost thou not see, O Gaul! how the steps of my age are honour-

* Morni was chief of a numerous tribe, in the days of Fingal, and his father Comhal. The last-mentioned hero was killed in battle against Morni's tribe; but the valour and conduct of Fingal reduced them, at last, to obedience. We find the two heroes perfectly reconciled in this poem.

† Stru'-moné, *stream of the hill.* Here the proper name of a rivulet in the neighbourhood of Selma.—*M.* It is to be regretted, that tradition did not hand down particulars relating to Poems, whose scenes are laid in Morven, as it does those which are laid in Ireland. In all my travels and wanderings I could find no Ossianic relics in Argyleshire. *C.*

ed? Morni moves forth, and the young meet him, with awe, and turn their eyes, with silent joy, on his course. But I never fled from danger, my son! my sword lightened through the darkness of war. The stranger melted before me; the mighty were blasted in my presence."

Gaul brought the arms to Morni: the aged warrior is covered with steel. He took the spear in his hand, which was stained with the blood of the valiant. He came towards Fingal, his son attended his steps. The son of Comhal arose before him with joy, when he came in his locks of age.

"Chief of roaring Strumon!" said the rising soul of Fingal; "do I behold thee in arms, after thy strength has failed? Often has Morni shone in fight, like the beam of the ascending sun; when he disperses the storms of the hill, and brings peace to the glittering fields. But why didst thou not rest in thine age? Thy renown is in the song. The people behold thee, and bless the departure of mighty Morni. Why didst thou rest in thine age? The foe will vanish before Fingal!"

"Son of Comhal, replied the chief, "the strength of Morni's arm has failed. I attempt to draw the sword of my youth, but it remains in its place. I throw the spear, but it falls short of the mark. I feel the weight of my shield. We decay like the grass of the hill: our strength returns no more. I have a son, O Fingal! his soul has delighted in Morni's deeds; but his sword has not been lifted against a foe, neither has his fame begun. I come with him to war; to direct his arm in fight. His

renown will be a light to my soul, in the dark hour of my departure. O that the name of Morni were forgot among the people! that the heroes would only say, "Behold the father of Gaul!"

"King of Strumon," Fingal replied, "Gaul shall lift the sword in fight. But he shall lift it before Fingal; my arm shall defend his youth. But rest thou in the halls of Selma; and hear of our renown. Bid the harp to be strung, and the voice of the bard to arise, that those who fall may rejoice in their fame; and the soul of Morni brighten with joy. Ossian! thou hast fought in battles: the blood of strangers is on thy spear: thy course be with Gaul, in the strife; but depart not from the side of Fingal! lest the foe should find you alone, and your fame fail in my presence.

"I saw* Gaul in his arms; my soul was mixed with his. The fire of the battle was in his eyes! he looked to the foe with joy. We spoke the words of friendship in secret; the lightning of our swords poured together; for we drew them behind the wood, and tried the strength of our arms on the empty air."

Night came down on Morven. Fingal sat at the beam of the oak.† Morni sat by his side with all

* Ossian speaks. The contrast between the old and young heroes is strongly marked. The circumstance of the latter's drawing their swords is well imagined, and agrees with the impatience of young soldiers, just entered upon action.

† Moss fir and oak, are yet burned by many of the natives of the north of Ireland.—This poor entertainment in his

his grey waving locks. Their words were of other times, of the mighty deeds of their fathers. Three bards, at times, touched the harp: Ullin was dear with his song. He sung of the mighty Comhal; but darkness* gathered on Morni's brow. He rolled his red eye on Ullin: at once ceased the song of the bard. Fingal observed the aged hero, and he mildly spoke. "Chief of Strumon, why that darkness? Let the days of other years be forgot. Our fathers contended in war; but we meet together, at the feast. Our swords are turned on the foe of our land: he melts before us on the field. Let the days of our fathers be forgot, hero of mossy Strumon!"

"King of Morven," replied the chief, "I remember thy father with joy. He was terrible in battle; the rage of the chief was deadly. My eyes were full of tears, when the king of heroes fell. The valiant fall, O Fingal! the feeble remain on the hills! How many heroes have passed away, in the days of Morni! Yet I did not shun the battle; neither did I fly from the strife of the valiant. Now let the friends of Fingal rest; for the night is around; that they may rise, with strength, to battle against car-borne Lathmon. I hear the sound of his host

native Morven, but ill accords with the high-sounding titles of the translator—"smooth pillars, &c. in the Hall of Fingal!"

Ullin had chosen ill the subject of his song. The *darkness which gathered on Morni's brow,* did not proceed from any dislike he had to Comhal's name, though they were foes, but from his fear that the song would awaken Fingal to a remembrance of the feuds which had subsisted of old between the families. Fingal's speech on this occasion abounds with generosity and good sense.

like thunder moving on the hills. Ossian! and fair-haired Gaul! ye are young and swift in the race. Observe the foes of Fingal from that woody hill. But approach them not, your fathers are not near to shield you. Let not your fame fall at once. The valour of youth may fail!"

We heard the words of the chief with joy. We moved in the clang of our arms. Our steps are on the woody hill. Heaven burns with all its stars. The meteors of death fly over the field. The distant noise of the foe reached our ears. It was then Gaul spoke, in his valour: his hand half unsheathed the sword.

"Son of Fingal!" he said, "why burns the soul of Gaul? My heart beats high. My steps are disordered; my hand trembles on my sword. When I look towards the foe, my soul lightens before me. I see their sleeping host. Tremble thus the souls of the valiant in battles of the spear? How would the soul of Morni rise if we should rush on the foe! Our renown would grow in song: Our steps would be stately in the eyes of the brave."

"Son of Morni," I replied, "my soul delights in war. I delight to shine in battle alone, to give my name to the bards. But what if the foe should prevail; can I behold the eyes of the king? They are terrible in his displeasure, and like the flames of death. But I will not behold them in his wrath! Ossian shall prevail or fall. But shall the fame of the vanquished rise? They pass like a shade away. But the fame of Ossian shall rise! his deeds shall be like his father's. Let us rush in our arms; son

of Morni, let us rush to fight. Gaul! if thou shouldst return, go to Selma's lofty hall. Tell to Everallin that I fell with fame; carry this sword to Branno's daughter. Let her give it to Oscar, when the years of his youth shall arise."

"Son of Fingal," Gaul replied with a sigh; shall I return after Ossian is low? what would my father say, what Fingal the king of men? The feeble would turn their eyes and say, 'Behold Gaul, who left his friend in his blood!' Ye shall not behold me, ye feeble, but in the midst of my renown! Ossian, I have heard from my father the mighty deeds of heroes; their mighty deeds when alone; for the soul increases in danger."

"Son of Morni," I replied, and strode before him on the heath, "our fathers shall praise our valour when they mourn our fall. A beam of gladness shall rise on their souls, when their eyes are full of tears. They will say, "Our sons have not fallen unknown: they spread death around them." But why should we think of the narrow house? The sword defends the brave. But death pursues the flight of the feeble; their renown is never heard."

We rushed forward through night: we came to the roar of a stream, which bent its blue course round the foe, through trees that echoed to its sound. We came to the bank of the stream, and saw the sleeping host. Their fires were decayed on the plain; the lonely steps of their scouts were distant far. I stretched my spear before me to support my steps over the stream. But Gaul took my

hand, and spoke the words of the brave. "Shall the son of Fingal rush on the sleeping foe? Shall he come like a blast by night, when it overturns the young trees in secret? Fingal did not thus receive his fame, nor dwells renown on the grey hairs of Morni, for actions like these. Strike, Ossian, strike the shield, and let their thousands rise! Let them meet Gaul in his first battle, that he may try the strength of his arm."

My soul rejoiced over the warrior: my bursting tears came down. "And the foe shall meet thee, Gaul!" I said: "the fame of Morni's son shall arise. But rush not too far, my hero: let the gleam of thy steel be near to Ossian. Let our hands join in slaughter. Gaul! dost thou not behold that rock? Its grey side dimly gleams to the stars. Should the foe prevail, let our back be towards the rock. Then shall they fear to approach our spears; for death is in our hands!"

I struck thrice my echoing shield. The starting foe arose. We rushed on in the sound of our arms. Their crowded steps fly over the heath. They thought that the mighty Fingal was come. The strength of their arms withered away. The sound of their flight was like that of flame, when it rushes through the blasted groves. It was then the spear of Gaul flew in its strength; it was then his sword arose. Cremor fell; and mighty Leth. Dunthormo struggled in his blood. The steel rushed through Crotho's side, as bent, he rose on his spear; the black stream poured from the wound, and hissed on the half-extinguished oak. Cathmin saw the

steps of the hero behind him, he ascended a blasted tree; but the spear pierced him from behind. Shrieking, panting, he fell. Moss and withered branches pursue his fall, and strew the blue arms of Gaul.

Such were thy deeds, son of Morni, in the first of thy battles. Nor slept the sword by thy side, thou last of Fingal's race! Ossian rushed forward in his strength; the people fell before him; as the grass by the staff of the boy, when he whistles along the field, and the grey-beard of the thistle falls. But careless the youth moves on; his steps are towards the desert. Grey morning rose around us; the winding streams are bright along the heath. The foe gathered on a hill; and the rage of Lathmon rose. He bent the red eye of his wrath: he is silent in his rising grief. He often struck his bossy shield; and his steps are unequal on the heath. I saw the distant darkness of the hero, and I spoke to Morni's son.

"Car-borne chief of Strumon, dost thou behold the foe? they gather on the hill in their wrath. Let our steps be towards the king.* He shall rise in his strength, and the host of Lathmon vanish. Our fame is around us, warrior, the eyes of the aged† will rejoice. But let us fly, son of Morni, Lathmon descends the hill. "Then let our steps be slow," replied the fair-haired Gaul; "lest the foe say, with a smile, "Behold the warriors of night. They are like ghosts, terrible in darkness;

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* Fingal. † Fingal and Morni.

they melt away before the beam of the east." Ossian take the shield of Gormar who fell beneath thy spear. The aged heroes will rejoice beholding the deeds of their sons."

Such were our words on the plain, when Sulmath* came to car-borne Lathmon: Sulmath chief of Dutha at the dark-rolling stream of Duvranna.† "Why dost thou not rush, son of Nuäth, with a thousand of thy heroes? Why dost thou not descend with thy host, before the warriors fly? Their blue arms are beaming to the rising light, and their steps are before us on the heath!"

"Son of the feeble hand," saith Lathmon, "shall my host descend! They are but two, son of Dutha! shall a thousand lift their steel! Nuäth would mourn, in his hall, for the departure of his fame. His eyes would turn from Lathmon, when the tread of his feet approached. Go thou to the heroes, chief of Dutha! I behold the stately steps of Ossian. His fame is worthy of my steel! let us contend in fight."

The noble Sulmath came. I rejoiced in the words of the king. I raised the shield on my arm; Gaul placed in my hand the sword of Morni. We returned to the murmuring stream; Lathmon came down in his strength. His dark host rolled, like

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* Suil-mhath, *a man of good eye-sight.*

† Dubh bhranna, *dark mountain-stream.* A river in Scotland, which falls into the sea at Banff, still retains the name of Duvran. If that is meant in this passage, Lathmon must have been a prince of the Pictish nation, or those Caledonians who inhabited of old the eastern coast of Scotland.

clouds, behind him: but the son of Nuäth was bright in his steel!

"Son of Fingal," said the hero, "thy fame has grown on our fall. How many lie there of my people by thy hand, thou king of men! Lift now thy spear against Lathmon; lay the son of Nuäth low! Lay him low among his warriors, or thou thyself must fall! It shall never be told in my halls that my people fell in my presence; that they fell in the presence of Lathmon when his sword rested by his side: the blue eyes of Cutha would roll in tears; her steps be lonely in the vales of Dunlathmon!"

"Neither shall it be told," I replied, "that the son of Fingal fled. Were his steps covered with darkness, yet would not Ossian fly! his soul would meet him and say, "Does the bard of Selma fear the foe?" No! he does not fear the foe. His joy is in the midst of battle!"

Lathmon came on with his spear. He pierced the shield of Ossian. I felt the cold steel by my side. I drew the sword of Morni. I cut the spear in twain. The bright point fell glittering on earth. The son of Nuäth burnt in his wrath. He lifted high his sounding shield. His dark eyes rolled above it, as bending forward, it shone like a gate of brass! but Ossian's spear pierced the brightness of its bosses, and sunk in a tree that rose behind. The shield hung on the quivering lance! but Lathmon still advanced! Gaul foresaw the fall of the chief. He stretched his buckler before my sword;

when it descended, in a stream of light, over the king of Dunlathmon!

Lathmon beheld the son of Morni. The tear started from his eye. He threw the sword of his fathers on earth, and spoke the words of the brave. "Why should Lathmon fight against the first of men? Your souls are beams from heaven; your swords the flames of death! Who can equal the renown of the heroes, whose deeds are so great in youth! O that ye were in the halls of Nuäth, in the green dwelling of Lathmon! Then would my father say, that his son did not yield to the weak. But who comes, a mighty stream, along the echoing heath; the little hills are troubled before him; a thousand ghosts are on the beams of his steel; the ghosts of those who are to fall* by the arm of the king of resounding Morven. Happy art thou, O Fingal! thy sons shall fight thy wars. They go forth before thee; they return with the steps of their renown

Fingal came, in his mildness, rejoicing in secret over the deeds of his son. Morni's face brightened with gladness; his aged eyes look faintly through tears of joy. We came to the halls of Selma. We sat around the feast of shells. The maids of song came into our presence, and the mildly blushing Everallin! Her hair spreads on her neck of snow, her eye rolls in secret on Ossian. She touched the harp of music; we blessed the daughter of Branno!

* It was thought, in Ossian's time, that each person had his attending spirit. The traditions concerning this opinion are dark and unsatisfactory.

Fingal rose in his place, and spoke to Lathmon king of spears. The sword of Trenmor shook by his side, as high he raised his mighty arm. " Son of Nuäth," he said, " why dost thou search for fame in Morven ? We are not of the race of the feeble ; our swords gleam not over the weak. When did we rouse thee, O Lathmon ! with the sound of war ? Fingal does not delight in battle, though his arm is strong ! My renown grows on the fall of the haughty. The light of my steel pours on the proud in arms. The battle comes, and the tombs of the valiant rise ; the tombs of my people rise, O my fathers ! I at last must remain alone ! But I will remain renowned ; the departure of my soul shall be a stream of light. Lathmon ! retire to thy place ! Turn thy battles to other lands ! The race of Morven are renowned ; their foes are the sons of the unhappy ! "

THE

DEATH OF CUTHULLIN

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT

Cuthullin,* after the arms of Fingal had expelled Swaran from Ireland, continued to manage the affairs of that kingdom as the guardian of Cormac, the young king. In the third year of Cuthullin's administration, Torlath, the son of Cantéla, rebelled in Connaught; and advanced to Temora to dethrone Cormac. Cuthullin marched against him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in battle by Cuthullin's hand; but as he too eagerly pressed on the enemy he was mortally wounded. The affairs of Cormac, though, for some time, supported by Nathos, as mentioned in the following poem, fell into confusion at the death of Cuthullin. Cormac himself was slain by the rebel Cairbar; and the re-establishment of the royal family of Ireland by Fingal, furnishes the subject of the epic poem of Temora.

THE

DEATH OF CUTHULLIN:

A

Poem.

"IS the wind on the shield of Fingal? Or is the voice of past times in my hall? Sing on, sweet voice! for thou art pleasant. Thou carriest away my night with joy. Sing on, O Bragela, daughter of car-borne Sorglan!

"It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuthullin's sails. Often do the mists deceive me for the ship of my love! when they rise round some ghost, and spread their grey skirts on the wind. Why dost thou delay thy coming, son of the generous Semo? Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and raised the seas of Togorma,*

* Togorma, i. e. *the island of blue waves*. one of the Hebrides, was subject to Connal, the son of Caithbat, Cuthullin's friend. He is sometimes called the son of Colgar, from one of that name who was the founder of the family. Connal, a few days before the news of Torlath's revolt came to Temora, had sailed to Togorma, his native isle; where he was detained by contrary winds during the war in which Cuthullin was killed.

since thou hast been in the roar of battles, and Bragéla distant far! Hills of the isle of mist! when will ye answer to his hounds? But ye are dark in your clouds. Sad Bragéla calls in vain! Night comes rolling down. The face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. The hind sleeps, with the hart of the desert. They shall rise with morning's light, and feed by the mossy stream. But my tears return with the sun. My sighs come on with the night. When wilt thou come in thine arms, O chief of Erin's wars?"

Pleasant is thy voice in Ossian's ear, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! But retire to the hall of shells; to the beam of the burning oak. Attend to the murmur of the sea: it rolls at Dunscai's walls: let sleep descend on thy blue eyes. Let the hero arise in thy dreams!

Cuthullin sits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero. His thousands spread on the heath. A hundred oaks burn in the midst.* The feast of shells is smoking wide. Carril strikes the harp beneath a tree. His grey locks glitter in the beam. The rustling blast of night is near, and lifts his aged hair. His song is of the blue Togorma, and of its chief, Cuthullin's friend! "Why art thou absent, Connal, in the day of the gloomy storm? The chiefs of the south have convened, against the car-borne Cormac. The winds detain thy sails. Thy blue waters roll around

* The situation of the hero may be easily perceived by a stranger, on referring to the Map. *C.*

thee. But Cormac is not alone. The son of Semo fights his wars! Semo's son his battles fight! the terror of the stranger! He that is like the vapour of death, slowly borne by sultry winds. The sun reddens in his presence: the people fall around."

Such was the song of Carril, when a son of the foe appeared. He threw down his pointless spear. He spoke the words of Torlath! Torlath chief of heroes, at Lego's sable surge!* He that led his thousands to battle, against car-borne Cormac. Cormac who was distant far, in Temora's† echoing halls: he learned to bend the bow of his fathers; and to lift the spear. Nor long didst thou lift the spear, mildly-shining beam of youth! death stands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind its growing light! Cuthullin rose before the bard,‡ that came from generous Torlath. He offered him the shell of joy. He honoured the

* Here it appears evident that Torlath, the chief of Connaught, had advanced as far as the "*sable surge of the Lego*,—near Lisburn,—where he was met and killed by Cuthullin, who also died of the wounds received in the battle—for the purpose of dethroning the young Cormac. *C.*

† The royal palace of the Irish kings; Teamhrath, according to some of the bards. *M.*—About sixteen miles distant from the scene of Battle on Lego's lake! *C.*

‡ The bards were the heralds of ancient times; and their persons were sacred on account of their office. In later times they abused that privilege; and as their persons were inviolable, they satirized and lampooned so freely those who were not liked by their patrons, that they became a public nuisance. Screened under the character of heralds, they grossly abused the enemy when he would not accept the terms they offered.

son of songs. "Sweet voice on Lego!" he said, "what are the words of Torlath? Comes he to our feast or battle, the car-borne son of Cantéla?"*

"He comes to thy battle," replied the bard, "to the sounding strife of spears. When morning is grey on Lego, Torlath will fight on the plain. Wilt thou meet him in thine arms, king of the isle of mist. Terrible is the spear of Torlath! it is a meteor of night. He lifts it, and the people fall! death sits in the lightning of his sword!" "Do I fear," replied Cuthullin, "the spear of car-borne Torlath? He is brave as a thousand heroes: but my soul delights in war! The sword rests not by the side of Cuthullin, bard of the times of old! Morning shall meet me on the plain, and gleam on the blue arms of Semo's son. But sit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. Partake of the joyful shell: and hear the songs of Temora!"

"This is no time," replied the bard, "to hear the song of joy: when the mighty are to meet in battle, like the strength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou so dark, Slimora!† with all thy silent woods? No star trembles on thy top. No moon-beam on

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* Cean-teola', *head of a family*.

† Slia'mor, *a great hill*. *M.*—There is a very remarkable hill a few miles from Connor—Temora—which still bears the name of Slieumors—and it is a detached and very conspicuous link of the chain of Mora hills that bound Te-Mora—Connor—to the south-east and north-east. Ireland requires I should remark, that the beautiful and highly poetical apostrophe to Slimora, is the effusion of another Irish bard. *C.*

thy side. But the meteors of death are there: the grey watery forms of ghosts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy silent woods?" He retired, in the sound of his song. Carril joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul. The ghosts of departed bards heard on Slimora's side. Soft sounds spread along the wood. The silent valleys of night rejoice. So, when he sits in the silence of the day, in the valley of his breeze, the humming of the mountain bee comes to Ossian's ear: the gale drowns it in its course; but the pleasant sound returns again! Slant looks the sun on the field! gradual grows the shade of the hill!

"Raise," said Cuthullin, to his hundred bards, "the song of the noble Fingal: that song which he hears at night, when the dreams of his rest descend: when the bards strike the distant harp, and the faint light gleams on Selma's walls. Or let the grief of Lara rise: the sighs of the mother of Calmar,* when he was sought, in vain, on his hills; when she beheld his bow in the hall. Carril, place the shield of Caithbat on that branch. Let the spear of Cuthullin be near; that the sound of my battle may rise, with the grey beam of the east." The

* Calmar, the son of Matha. His death is related at large in the third book of Fingal. He was the only son of Matha; and the family was extinct in him. The seat of the family was on the banks of the river *Lara*, in the neighbourhood of *Lego*, and probably near the place where Cuthullin lay; which circumstance suggested to him, the lamentation of Alcléthа over her son.

hero leaned on his father's shield: the song of Lara rose! The hundred bards were distant far: Carril alone is near the chief. The words of the song were his: the sound of his harp was mournful.

"Alclétha* with the aged locks! mother of car-borne Calmar! why dost thou look toward the desert to behold the return of thy son? These are not his heroes, dark on the heath: nor is that the voice of Calmar. It is but the distant grove, Alclétha! but the roar of the mountain wind!" "Who† bounds over Lara's stream, sister of the noble Calmar? Does not Alclétha behold his spear? But her eyes are dim! Is it not the son of Matha, daughter of my love?"

"It is but an aged oak, Alclétha!" replied the lovely weeping Alona.‡ "It is but an oak, Alclétha, bent over Lara's stream. But who comes along the plain? sorrow is in his speed. He lifts high the spear of Calmar. Alclétha, it is covered with blood!" "But it is covered with the blood of foes,§ sister of car-borne Calmar! His spear never returned unstained with blood: nor his bow from the strife of the mighty. The battle is consumed in his presence:

* Ald-cla'tha, *decaying beauty:* probably a poetical name given to the mother of Calmar, by the bard himself.

† Alclétha speaks. Calmar had promised to return by a certain day, and his mother and his sister Alona are represented as looking, with impatience, towards that quarter where they expected Calmar should make his first appearance

‡ Alùine, *exquisitely beautiful.*

§ Alclétha speaks.

he is a flame of death, Alona! Youth* of the mournful speed! where is the son of Alcétha? Does he return with his fame, in the midst of his echoing shields? Thou art dark and silent! Calmar is then no more! Tell me not, warrior, how he fell. I must not hear of his wound!" Why dost thou look towards the desert, mother of low-laid Calmar?

Such was the song of Carril, when Cuthullin lay on his shield. The bards rested on their harps. Sleep fell softly around. The son of Semo was awake alone. His soul was fixed on war. The burning oaks began to decay. Faint red light is spread around. A feeble voice is heard! The ghost of Calmar came! He stalked dimly along the beam. Dark is the wound in his side. His hair is disordered and loose. Joy sits pale on his face. He seems to invite Cuthullin to his cave.

"Son of the cloudy night!" said the rising chief of Erin. "Why dost thou bend thy dark eyes on me, ghost of the noble Calmar? Wouldest thou frighten me, O Matha's son! from the battles of Cormac? Thy hand was not feeble in war: neither was thy voice for peace. How art thou changed, chief of Lara! if thou now dost advise to fly! But, Calmar, I never fled. I never feared the ghosts of night. Small is their knowledge, weak their hands; their dwelling is in the wind. But my soul grows in danger, and rejoices in the noise of steel. Retire thou to thy cave. Thou art not Calmar's ghost.

* She addresses herself to Larnir, Calmar's friend, who had returned with the news of his death.

He delighted in battle. His arm was like the thunder of heaven!" He retired in his blast with joy for he had heard the voice of his praise.

The faint beam of the morning rose. The sound of Caithbat's buckler spread. Green Erin's warriors convened, like the roar of many streams. The horn of war is heard over Lego.* The mighty Torlath came! "Why dost thou come with thy thousands, Cuthullin?" said the chief on Lego. "I know the strength of thy arm. Thy soul is an unextinguished fire. Why fight we not on the plain, and let our hosts behold our deeds? Let them behold us like roaring waves, that tumble round a rock: the mariners hasten away, and look on their strife with fear."

"Thou risest, like the sun, on my soul," replied the son of Semo. "Thine arm is mighty, O Torlath! and worthy of my wrath. Retire, ye men of Ullin, to Slimora's shady side. Behold the chief of Erin, in the day of his fame. Carril! tell to mighty Connal, if Cuthullin must fall, tell him I accused the winds, which roar on Togorma's waves. Never was he absent in battle, when the strife of my fame arose. Let his sword be before Cormac, like the beam of heaven. Let his counsel sound in Temora, in the day of danger.

He rushed, in the sound of his arms, like the ter-

* I am induced to notice this subject and other corroborating points, that the reader may see the rational grounds of my system, and give me credit for the transfer of the death of Cuthullin from Connaught to the banks of the Legon river. *C.*

rible spirit of Loda,* when he comes, in the roar of a thousand storms, and scatters battles from his eyes. He sits on a cloud over Lochlin's seas. His mighty hand is on his sword. Winds lift his flaming locks! The waning moon half lights his dreadful face. His features blended in darkness arise to view. So terrible was Cuthullin in the day of his fame. Torlath fell by his hand. His heroes mourned. They gather round the chief, like the clouds of the desert. A thousand swords rose at once; a thousand arrows flew; but the son of Semo stood like a rock in the midst of a roaring sea. They fell around. He strode in blood. Dark Slimora echoed wide. The sons of Ullin† came. The battle spread over Lego.‡ The chief of Erin overcame. He returned over the field with his fame. But pale he returned! The joy of his face was dark. He rolled his eyes in silence. The sword hung, unsheathed, in his hand. His spear bent at every step!

"Carril," said the chief in secret, "the strength of Cuthullin fails. My days are with the years that are past. No morning of mine shall arise. They shall seek me at Temora, but I shall not be found. Cormac will weep in his hall, and say, "Where is Erin's chief?" But my name is renowned! my

* Loda, in the third book of Fingal, is mentioned as a place of worship in Scandinavia: by the *spirit of Loda*, the poet probably means Odin, the great deity of the northern nations. He is described here with all his terrors.

† Ulster. *C.*

‡ The Legon is not knee deep at the place where I imagine the battle was fought on its banks. *C.*

fame in the song of bards. The youth will say in secret, O let me die as Cuthullin died! Renown clothed him like a robe. The light of his fame is great. Draw the arrow from my side. Lay Cuthullin beneath that oak. Place the shield of Caithbat near, that they may behold me amidst the arms of my fathers!"

"And is the son of Semo fallen?" said Carril with a sigh. "Mournful are Tura's walls. Sorrow dwells at Dunscai. Thy spouse is left alone in her youth. The son* of thy love is alone! He shall come to Bragéla, and ask her why she weeps? He shall lift his eyes to the wall, and see his father's sword. "Whose sword is that?" he will say. The soul of his mother is sad. Who is that, like the hart of the desert, in the murmur of his course? His eyes looked wildly round in search of his friend. Connal, son of Colgar, where hast thou been, when the mighty fell? Did the seas of Togorma roll around thee? Was the wind of the south in thy sails? The mighty have fallen in battle, and thou wast not there. Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Morven's woody land. Fingal will be sad, and the sons of the desert mourn!"

By the dark rolling waves of Lego they raised the

* Conloch, who was afterwards very famous for his great exploits in Ireland. He was so remarkable for his dexterity in handling the javelin, that when a good marksman is described it has passed into a proverb, in the north of Scotland, *He is unerring as the arm of Conloch.*

heroes tomb.* Luath,† at a distance, lies. The song of bards rose over the dead.

"Blest‡ be thy soul, son of Semo! Thou wert mighty in battle. Thy strength was like the strength of a stream: thy speed like the eagle's wing. Thy path in battle was terrible: the steps of death were behind thy sword. Blest be thy soul, son of Semo, car-borne chief of Dunscai? Thou hast not fallen by the sword of the mighty, neither was thy blood on the spear of the brave. The arrow came, like the sting of death in a blast: nor did the feeble hand, which drew the bow, perceive it. Peace to thy soul, in thy cave, chief of the isle of mist!"

"The mighty are dispersed at Temora: there is none in Cormac's hall. The king mourns in his youth. He does not behold thy return. The sound of thy shield is ceased: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy rest in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars! Bragela will not hope for thy return, or see thy sails

* Here the reader will observe that I have carried on my corrobation to a climax of proof relative to the scene of the hero's death! The poem itself proves it distinctly, and leaves us to wonder how the translator could have fallen into such an error. *C.*

† It was of old the custom to bury the favourite dog near the master. This was not peculiar to the ancient Scots, for we find it practised by many other nations in their ages of heroism. There is a stone shewn still at Dunscai, in the isle of Sky, to which Cuthullin commonly bound his dog Luath. The stone goes by his name to this day.

‡ This is the song of the bards over Cuthullin's tomb. Every stanza closes with some remarkable title of the hero, which was always the custom in funeral elegies.

in ocean's foam. Her steps are not on the shore: nor her ear open to the voice of thy rowers. She sits in the hall of shells. She sees the arms of him that is no more. Thine eyes are full of tears, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! Blest be thy soul in death, O chief of shady Tura!"*

* Cuthullin, it appears, acquired this appellation from his general residence at Tura—Carrickfergus. *C.*

DAR-THULA:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

It may not be improper here to give the story which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed down by tradition. Usnoth lord of Etha, which is probably that part of Argyleshire which is near Loch Eta, an arm of the sea in Lorn, had three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, by Slissáma, the daughter of Semo, and sister to the celebrated Cuthullin. The three brothers, when very young, were sent over to Ireland, by their father, to learn the use of arms, under their uncle, Cuthullin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They were just landed in Ulster when the news of Cuthullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very young, took the command of Cuthullin's army, made head against Cairbar the usurper, and defeated him in several battles. Cairbar at last having found means to murder Cormac the lawful king, the army of Nathos shifted sides, and he himself was obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, resided, at that time, in *Selâma,* a castle in Ulster*: she saw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos; but a storm rising at sea, they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coast of Ulster, where Cairbar was encamped with his army. The three brothers, after having defended themselves, for some time, with great bravery, were overpowered and slain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herself upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

The poem opens, on the night preceding the death of the sons of Usnoth, and brings in, by way of episode, what passed before. It relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the common tradition; this account is the most probable, as suicide seems to have been unknown in those early times: for no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

* This affirms my supposition relative to the site of Selma being where Grey Abbey now stands, on the shore between Belfast and Carrickfergus. *C.*

DAR-THULA:

A

Poem.

DAUGHTER of heaven, fair art thou! the silence of thy face is pleasant! Thou comest forth in loveliness. The stars attend thy blue course in the east. The clouds rejoice in thy presence, O moon! They brighten their dark-brown sides. Who is like thee in heaven, light of the silent night? The stars are ashamed in thy presence. They turn away their sparkling eyes. Whither dost thou retire from thy course, when the darkness of thy countenance grows? Hast thou thy hall, like Ossian? Dwellest thou in the shadow of grief? Have thy sisters fallen from heaven? Are they who rejoiced with thee, at night, no more? Yes! they have fallen, fair light! and thou dost often retire to mourn. But thou thyself shalt fail, one night; and leave thy blue path in heaven. The stars will then lift their heads: they, who were ashamed in thy presence, will rejoice. Thou art now clothed with thy brightness. Look from thy gates in the sky. Burst the cloud, O wind! that the daughter of night may look forth! that the shaggy mountains

may brighten, and the ocean roll its white waves, in light.

Nathos* is on the deep, and Althos, that beam of youth. Ardan is near his brothers. They move in the gloom of their course. The sons of Usnoth move in darkness, from the wrath of Cairbar† of Erin. Who is that, dim by their side? The night has covered her beauty! Her hair sighs on ocean's wind. Her robe streams in dusky wreaths. She is like the fair spirit of heaven in the midst of his shadowy mist. Who is it but Dar-thula,‡ the first of Erin's maids? She has fled from the love of Cairbar, with blue-shielded Nathos. But the winds deceive thee, O Dar-thula! They deny the woody Etha, to thy sails. These are not the mountains of Nathos; nor is that the roar of his climbing waves. The halls of Cairbar are near: the towers of the foe lift their heads! Erin stretches its green head into the sea. Tura's bay* receives the ship. Where

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* Nathos signifies, *youthful*, Ailthos, *exquisite beauty*, Ardan, *pride*.

† Cairbar, who murdered Cormac king of Ireland and usurped the throne. He was afterwards killed by Oscar, the son of Ossian, in a single combat. The poet, upon other occasions, gives him the epithet of red-haired. *M.*—Vide the data of the map. *C.*

‡ Dar-thula, or Dart-'huile, *a woman with fine eyes*. She was the most famous beauty of antiquity. To this day, when a woman is praised for her beauty, the common phrase is, that *she is as lovely as Dar-thula*.

§ Some part of that arm of the sea is doubtless meant which is known as Belfast Loch—Carrickfergus Bay—Tura—being generally the place of landing from the opposite coast of Morven. *C.*

have ye been, ye southern winds! when the sons of my love were deceived? But ye have been sporting on plains, pursuing the thistle's beard. O that ye had been rustling in the sails of Nathos, till the hills of Etha arose! till they arose in their clouds, and saw their returning chief! Long hast thou been absent, Nathos! the day of thy return is past!

But the land of strangers saw thee lovely! thou wast lovely in the eyes of Dar-thula. Thy face was like the light of the morning. Thy hair like the raven's wing. Thy soul was generous and mild, like the hour of the setting sun. Thy words were the gale of the reeds; the gliding stream of Lora! But when the rage of battle rose, thou wast a sea in a storm. The clang of thy arms was terrible: the host vanished at the sound of thy course. It was then Dar-thula beheld thee, from the top of her mossy tower: from the tower of Seláma,* where her fathers dwelt.

"Lovely art thou, O stranger!" she said, for her trembling soul arose. "Fair art thou in thy battles, friend of the fallen Cormac!† Why dost thou rush on in thy valour, youth of the ruddy look?

* The word signifies either *beautiful to behold*, or a place *with a pleasant or wide prospect*. In early times, they built their houses upon eminences, to command a view of the country, and to prevent their being surprised: many of them, on that account, were called Selàma. The famous Selma of Fingal is derived from the same root. *M.*—Here the translator helps me out in my conjectures. Vide the map. *C.*

† Cormac, the young king of Ireland, who was privately murdered by Cairbar. *M.*—That is, the usurper was killed by the rightful king. *C.*

Few are thy hands in fight, against the dark-browed Cairbar! O that I might be freed from his love!* that I might rejoice in the presence of Nathos! Blest are the rocks of Etha! they will behold his steps at the chace! they will see his white bosom, when the winds lift his flowing hair!" Such were thy words, Dar-thula, in Selåma's mossy towers. But now, the night is around thee. The winds have deceived thy sails. The winds have deceived thy sails, Dar-thula! Their blustering sound is high. Cease a little while, O north wind! let me hear the voice of the lovely. Thy voice is lovely, Dar-thula, between the rustling blasts!

"Are these the rocks of Nathos?" she said, "This the roar of his mountain-streams? Comes that beam of light from Usnoth's nightly hall? The mist spreads around; the beam is feeble and distant far. But the light of Dar-thula's soul dwells in the chief of Etha! Son of the generous Usnoth, why that broken sigh? Are we in the land of strangers, chief of echoing Etha?"

"These are not the rocks of Nathos," he replied, "nor this the roar of his streams. No light comes from Etha's halls, for they are distant far. We are in the land of strangers, in the land of cruel Cairbar. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula. Erin here lifts her hills. Go towards the north, Althos: be thy steps, Ardan, along the coast; that the foe may not come in darkness, and our hopes of Etha fail." "I will go towards that mossy tower, to see

* That is, of the love of Cairbar.

who dwells about the beam. Rest, Dar-thula, on the shore! rest in peace, thou lovely light! the sword of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of heaven!"

He went. She sat alone; she heard the rolling of the wave. The big tear is in her eye. She looks for returning Nathos. Her soul trembles at the blast. She turns her ear towards the tread of his feet. The tread of his feet is not heard. "Where art thou, son of my love! The roar of the blast is around me. Dark is the cloudy night. But Nathos does not return. What detains thee, chief of Etha? Have the foes met the hero in the strife of the night?"

He returned, but his face was dark. He had seen his departed friend! It was the wall of Tura. The ghost of Cuthullin stalked there alone:* The sighing of his breast was frequent. The decayed flame of his eyes was terrible! His spear was a column of mist. The stars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave: his eye a light seen afar. He told the tale of grief. The soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun in the day of mist, when his face is watry and dim.

"Why art thou sad, O Nathos?" said the lovely daughter of Colla. "Thou art a pillar of light to Dar-thula. The joy of her eyes is in Etha's chief. Where is my friend, but Nathos? My father, my

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* There is no place in Ireland so veiled in the mists of antiquity as Carrickfergus Castle. That place and Connor—Temora—were considered the most ancient as far back as 1316, when Sir Edward, brother of King Robert Bruce, landed in Ireland. Tradition says it was built by King Fergus and took his name. *C.*

brother is fallen! Silence dwells on Seláma. Sadness spreads on the blue streams of my land. My friends have fallen with Cormac. The mighty were slain in the battles of Erin. Hear, son of Usnoth! hear, O Nathos! my tale of grief.

"Evening darkened on the plain. The blue streams failed before mine eyes. The unfrequent blast came rustling, in the tops of Seláma's groves. My seat was beneath a tree, on the walls of my fathers. Truthil past before my soul; the brother of my love: He that was absent in battle, against the haughty Cairbar? Bending on his spear, the grey-haired Colla came. His downcast face is dark, and sorrow dwells in his soul. His sword is on the side of the hero: the helmet of his fathers on his head. The battle grows in his breast. He strives to hide the tear."

"Dar-thula, my daughter," he said, "thou art the last of Colla's race! Truthil is fallen in battle. The chief of Seláma is no more! Cairbar comes, with his thousands, towards Seláma's walls. Colla will meet his pride, and revenge his son. But where shall I find thy safety, Dar-thula with the dark-brown hair! thou art lovely as the sun-beam of heaven, and thy friends are low!" "Is the son of battle fallen?" I said, with a bursting sigh. "Ceased the generous soul of Truthil to lighten through the field? My safety, Colla, is in that bow. I have learned to pierce the deer. Is not Cairbar, like the hart of the desert, father of fallen Truthil?"

"The face of age brightened with [illegible] The crowded [illegible] his eyes poured dow[illegible] [illegible] lips

of Colla trembled. His grey beard whistled in the blast. "Thou art the sister of Truthil," he said; "thou burnest in the fire of his soul. Take, Dar-thula, take that spear, that brazen shield, that burnished helm: they are the spoils of a warrior, a son of early youth! When the light rises on Seláma, we go to meet the car-borne Cairbar. But keep thou near the arm of Colla, beneath the shadow of my shield. Thy father, Dar-thula, could once defend thee; but age is trembling on his hand. The strength of his arm has failed. His soul is darkened with grief."

"We passed the night in sorrow. The light of morning rose. I shone in the arms of battle. The grey-haired hero moved before. The sons of Seláma convened, around the sounding shield of Colla. But few were they in the plain, and their locks were grey. The youths had fallen with Truthil, in the battle of car-borne Cormac. "Friends of my youth! said Colla, "it was not thus you have seen me in arms. It was not thus I strode to battle, when the great Confaden fell. But ye are laden with grief. The darkness of age comes like the mist of the desert. My shield is worn with years! my sword is fixed* in its place! I said to my soul, thy evening shall be calm: Thy departure like a fading light. But the storm has returned. I bend like an aged oak. My boughs

* It was the custom of ancient times, that every warrior at a certain age, or when he became unfit for the field, fixed his arms in the great hall where the tribe feasted upon joyful occasions. He was afterwards never to appear in battle; and this stage of life was called the *time of fixing of the arms.*

are fallen on Seláma. I tremble in my place. Where art thou, with thy fallen heroes, O my beloved Truthil! Thou answerest not from thy rushing blast. The soul of thy father is sad. But I will be sad no more, Cairbar or Colla must fall! I feel the returning strength of my arm. My heart leaps at the sound of war."

"The hero drew his sword. The gleaming blades of his people rose. They moved along the plain. Their grey hair streamed in the wind. Cairbar sat at the feast, in the silent plain of Lona.* He saw the coming of the heroes. He called his chiefs to war. Why† should I tell to Nathos, how the strife of battle grew? I have seen thee in the midst of thousands, like the beam of heaven's fire: it is beautiful, but terrible; the people fall in its dreadful course. The spear of Colla flew. He remembered the battles of his youth. An arrow came with its sound. It pierced the hero's side. He fell on his echoing shield. My soul started with

* Lona, *a marshy plain*. Cairbar had just provided an entertainment for his army, upon the defeat of Truthil, the son of Colla, and the rest of the party of Cormac, when Colla and his aged warriors arrived to give him battle.

† The poet, by an artifice, avoids the description of the battle of Lona, as it would be improper in the mouth of a woman, and could have nothing new, after the numerous descriptions, of that kind, in the rest of the poems. He, at the same time, gives an opportunity to Dar-thula to pass a fine compliment on her lover. *M.*—"The plains," near Belfast, are now called—Ma-Lona, and as they were in the neighbourhood of Cairbar's Country, so it is possible, nay probable, that they are the scenes of the battle of Lona *C.*

fear. I stretched my buckler over him: but my heaving breast was seen! Cairbar came with his spear. He beheld Seláma's maid. Joy rose on his dark-brown face. He stayed the lifted steel. He raised the tomb of Colla. He brought me weeping to Seláma. He spoke the words of love, but my soul was sad. I saw the shields of my fathers; the sword of car-borne Truthil. I saw the arms of the dead; the tear was on my cheek! Then thou didst come, O Nathos! and gloomy Cairbar fled. He fled like the ghost of the desert before the morning's beam. His host was not near: and feeble was his arm against thy steel! Why art thou sad, O Nathos! said the lovely daughter of Colla?"

"I have met," replied the hero, "the battle in my youth. My arm could not lift the spear when danger first arose. My soul brightened in the presence of war, as the green narrow vale, when the sun pours his streamy beams, before he hides his head in a storm. The lonely traveller feels a mournful joy. He sees the darkness that slowly comes. My soul brightened in danger before I saw Seláma's fair; before I saw thee, like a star, that shines on the hill, at night: the cloud advances, and threatens the lovely light! We are in the land of foes. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula! The strength of our friends is not near, nor the mountains of Etha. Where shall I find thy peace, daughter of mighty Colla! The brothers of Nathos are brave! and his own sword has shone in fight. But what are the sons of Usnoth to the host of dark-browed Cairbar! O that the winds had brought

thy sails, Oscar* king of men! Thou didst promise to come to the battles of fallen Cormac! Then would my hand be strong, as the flaming arm of death. Cairbar would tremble in his halls, and peace dwell round the lovely Dar-thula. But why dost thou fall, my soul? The sons of Usnoth may prevail!"

"And they will prevail, O Nathos!" said the rising soul of the maid. "Never shall Dar-thula behold the halls of gloomy Cairbar. Give me those arms of brass, that glitter to the passing meteor. I see them dimly in the dark-bosomed ship. Dar-thula will enter the battle of steel. Ghost of the noble Colla! do I behold thee on that cloud? Who is that dim beside thee? Is it the car-borne Truthil? Shall I behold the halls of him that slew Seláma's chief? No: I will not behold them, spirits of my love!"

Joy rose in the face of Nathos, when he heard the white-bosomed maid. "Daughter of Seláma! thou shinest along my soul. Come, with thy thousands, Cairbar! the strength of Nathos is returned! Thou, O aged Usnoth! shalt not hear that thy son has fled. I remember thy words on Etha; when my sails began to rise: when I spread them towards Erin, towards the mossy walls of Tura! "Thou goest," he said, "O Nathos, to the king of shields!

* Oscar, the son of Ossian, had long resolved on the expedition into Ireland, against Cairbar, who had assassinated his friend Cathol, the son of Moran, an Irishman of noble extraction, and in the interest of the family of Cormac.

Thou goest to Cuthullin, chief of men, who never fled from danger. Let not thine arm be feeble: neither be thy thoughts of flight; lest the son of Semo should say, that Etha's race are weak. His words may come to Usnoth, and sadden his soul in the hall." The tear was on my father's cheek. He gave this shining sword!

"I came to Tura's bay: but the halls of Tura were silent. I looked around, and there was none to tell of the son of generous Semo. I went to the hall of shells, where the arms of his fathers hung. But the arms were gone, and aged Lamhor* sat in tears. "Whence are the arms of steel?" said the rising Lamhor. "The light of the spear has long been absent from Tura's dusky walls. Come ye from the rolling sea? Or from Temora's† mournful halls?"

"We come from the sea," I said, "from Usnoth's rising towers. We are the sons of Slis-sáma,‡ the daughter of car-borne Semo. Where is Tura's chief, son of the silent hall? But why should Nathos ask? for I behold thy tears. How did the mighty fall, son of the lonely Tura?" "He fell

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* Lamh-mhor, *mighty hand.*

† Temora was the residence of the supreme kings of Ireland. It is here called mournful, on account of the death of Cormac, who was murdered there by Cairbar, who usurped his throne. M.—Temora, is the Connor of the moderns—it is about twelve miles from Carrickfergus on the western side of Mora hills, which bounds Lena's heath. *C.*

‡ Slis-seamha, *soft bosom.* She was the wife of Usnoth, and daughter of Semo the chief of the *isle of mist.*

not," Lamhor replied, " like the silent star of night, when it flies through darkness and is no more. But he was like a meteor that shoots into a distant land. Death attends its dreary course. Itself is the sign of wars. Mournful are the banks of Lego; and the roar of streamy Lara! There the hero fell, son of the noble Usnoth!" " The hero fell in the midst of slaughter," I said with a bursting sigh. " His hand was strong in war. Death dimly sat behind his sword."

We came to *Lego's* sounding banks. We found his rising tomb.* His friends in battle are there: his bards of many songs. Three days we mourned over the hero: on the fourth, I struck the shield of Caithbat. The heroes gathered around with joy, and shook their beamy spears. Corlath was near with his host, the friend of car-borne Cairbar. We came like a stream by night. His heroes fell before us. When the people of the valley rose, they saw their blood with morning's light. But we rolled away, like wreaths of mist, to Cormac's echoing hall. Our swords rose to defend the king. But Temora's halls were empty. Cormac had fallen in his youth. The king of Erin was no more!

Sadness seized the sons of Erin. They slowly, gloomily retired: like clouds that, long having threatened rain, vanish behind the hills. The sons of Usnoth moved, in their grief, towards *Tura's*

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* Here are the grounds upon which I dispute the fall of Cuthullin in *Connaught*. Here I am borne out in the idea, that he fell in battle on the banks of the *Legon!* C.

sounding bay. We passed by Seláma.* Cairbar retired like Lano's mist, when driven before the winds. It was then I beheld thee, O Dar-thula! like the light of Etha's sun. "Lovely is that beam!" I said. The crowded sigh of my bosom rose. "Thou camest in thy beauty, Dar-thula, to Etha's mournful chief. But the winds have deceived us, daughter of Colla, and the foe is near!"

"Yes, the foe is near," said the rushing strength of Althos.† "I heard their clanging arms on the coast. I saw the dark wreaths of Erin's standard. Distinct is the voice of Cairbar,‡ Loud as Cromla's falling stream. He had seen the dark ship on the sea, before the dusky night came down. His people watch on Lena's plain. They lift ten thousand swords." "And let them lift ten thousand swords.

* His nephews on their return, moved towards "Tura's sounding bay—they passed by *Selama!*" It was on their way along the Loch. Does not this bear out my system? *C.*

† Althos had just returned from viewing the coast of Lena, whither he had been sent by Nathos, the beginning of the night. *M.*—The coast of Lena extends from Carmona bay, in Belfast Loch, to the north of Carrickfergus. C.

‡ Cairbar had gathered an army to the coast of Ulster, in order to oppose Fingal, who prepared for an expedition into Ireland, to re-establish the house of Cormac on the throne, which Cairbar had usurped. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was the Bay of Tura,* into which the ship of the sons of Usnoth was driven; so that there was no possibility of their escaping. *M.*—For the position, *vide* the map. *C.*

* Here it is evident that Cairbar was encamped on Lena, which is the rising ground along the coast of Carrickfergus Bay. *C.*

said Nathos with a smile. The sons of car-borne Usnoth will never tremble in danger! Why dost thou roll with all thy foam, thou roaring sea of Erin? Why do ye rustle, on your dark wings, ye whistling storms of the sky? Do ye think, ye storms, that ye keep Nathos on the coast? No: his soul detains him, children of the night! Althos! bring my father's arms: thou seest them beaming to the stars. Bring the spear of Semo.* It stands in the dark-bosomed ship.!"

He brought the arms. Nathos covered his limbs, in all their shining steel. The stride of the chief is lovely. The joy of his eyes was terrible. He looks towards the coming of Cairbar. The wind is rustling in his hair. Dar-thula is silent at his side. Her look is fixed on the chief. She strives to hide the rising sigh. Two tears swell in her radiant eyes!

"Althos," said the chief of Etha, "I see a cave in that rock.† Place Dar-thula there. Let thy arm, my brother, be strong. Ardan! we meet the foe; call to battle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his sounding steel, to meet the son of Usnoth! Dar-thula! if thou shalt escape, look not on the fallen Nathos! lift thy sails, O Althos! towards the echoing groves of my land.

* Semo was grandfather to Nathos by the mother's side. The spear mentioned here was given to Usnoth on his marriage, it being the custom then for the father of the lady to give his arms to his son-in-law.

† I need scarcely add that there is a very noted and spacious cave in the rock on which Carrickfergus—Tura's—Castle is built. *C.*

"Tell the chief, that his son fell with fame; that my sword did not shun the fight. Tell him I fell in the midst of thousands. Let the joy of his grief be great. Daughter of Colla! call the maids to Etha's echoing hall! let their songs arise for Nathos, when shadowy autumn returns. O that the voice of Cona, that Ossian, might be heard in my praise! then would my spirit rejoice in the midst of the rushing winds." "And my voice shall praise thee, Nathos, chief of the woody Etha! The voice of Ossian shall rise in thy praise, son of the generous Usnoth! Why was I not on *Lena*, when the battle rose? Then would the sword of Ossian defend thee; or himself fall low!"*

We sat, that night, in *Selma*, round the strength of the shell. The wind was abroad, in the oaks. The spirit of the mountain† roared. The blast came rustling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it the first. The crowded sighs of his bosom rose. "Some of my heroes are low," said the grey-haired king of Morven. "I hear the sound of death on the harp. Ossian, touch the trembling string. Bid the sorrow rise; that their spirits may fly with joy to Morven's woody hills!" I touched the harp before the king; the sound was mournful and low. "Bend forward from your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers!

* Usnoth.—"Why was I not on Lena?"—Vide the map. *C.*

† By the spirit of the mountain is meant that deep and melancholy sound which precedes a storm; well known to those who live in a high country.

bend. Lay bye the red terror of your course. Receive the falling chief; whether he comes from a distant land, or rises from the rolling sea. Let his robe of mist be near; his spear that is formed of a cloud. Place an half-extinguished meteor by his side, in the form of the hero's sword. And, oh! let his countenance be lovely, that his friends may delight in his presence. Bend from your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers! bend!"

Such was my song, in Selma, to the lightly-trembling harp. But Nathos was on Erin's shore, surrounded by the night. He heard the voice of the foe, amidst the roar of tumbling waves. Silent he heard their voice, and rested on his spear! Morning rose, with its beams. The sons of Erin appear, like grey rocks, with all their trees, they spread along the coast. Cairbar stood in the midst. He grimly smiled when he saw the foe. Nathos rushed forward, in his strength: nor could Dar-thula stay behind. She came with the hero, lifting her shining spear. "And who are these, in their armour, in the pride of youth? Who but the sons of Usnoth, Althos and dark-haired Arden?"

"Come," said Nathos, "come! chief of high Temora! Let our battle be on the coast, for the white-bosomed maid. His people are not with Nathos; they are behind these rolling seas. Why dost thou bring thy thousands against the chief of Etha? Thou didst fly* from him in battle, when his friends were around his spear." "Youth of the

* He alludes to the flight of Cairbar from Seláma.—The Grey Abbey.—Vide the map. C.

heart of pride, shall Erin's king fight with thee? Thy fathers were not among the renowned, nor of the kings of men. Are the arms of foes in their halls? Or the shields of other times? Cairbar is *renowned* in *Temora*, nor does he fight with feeble men!"

The tear started from car-borne Nathos. He turned his eyes to his brothers. Their spears flew at once. Three heroes lay on earth. Then the light of their swords gleamed on high. The ranks of Erin yield; as a ridge of dark clouds before a blast of wind! Then Cairbar ordered his people, and they drew a thousand bows. A thousand arrows flew. The sons of Usnoth fell in blood. They fell like three young oaks, which stood alone on the hill: The traveller saw the lovely trees, and wondered how they grew so lonely: the blast of the desert came by night, and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare!

Dar-thula stood in silent grief, and beheld their fall! No tear is in her eye. But her look is wildly sad. Pale was her cheek. Her trembling lips broke short an half-formed word. Her dark hair flew on wind. The gloomy Cairbar came. "Where is thy lover now? the car-borne chief of Etha? Hast thou beheld the halls of Usnoth? Or the dark-brown hills of Fingal? My battle would have roared on Morven, had not the winds met Dar-thula. Fingal himself would have been low, and sorrow dwelling in Selma!" Her shield fell from Dar-thula's arm. Her breast of snow appeared. It

appeared; but it was stained with blood. An arrow was fixed in her side. She fell on the fallen Nathos, like a wreath of snow! Her hair spreads wide on his face. Their blood is mixing round!

"Daughter of Colla! thou art low!" said Cairbar's hundred bards. "Silence is at the blue streams of Seláma. Truthil's* race have failed. When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin's maids? Thy sleep is long in the tomb. The morning distant far. The sun shall not come to thy bed and say, "Awake, Dar-thula! awake, thou first of women! the wind of spring is abroad. The flowers shake their heads on the green hills. The woods wave their growing leaves. Retire, O sun! the daughter of Colla is asleep. She will not come forth in her beauty. She will not move in the steps of her loveliness!"

Such was the song of the bards, when they raised the tomb. I sung over the grave, when the king of Morven came; when he came to green Erin to fight with car-borne Cairbar!

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* Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family

THE
BATTLE OF LORA:
A
Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feast to all his heroes; he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him in his expedition. They resented his neglect; and went over to Erragon, king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo soon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma, the beautiful wife of Erragon, fell in love with him. He found means to escape with her and come to Fingal, who resided then in Selma, on the western coast. Erragon invaded Scotland, and was slain in battle by Gaul the son of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. In this war Aldo fell, in a single combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon, and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief. *M.*

I can discover nothing in this Poem, which could serve as a clue to trace the scene of the battle in Scotland. C.

THE

BATTLE OF LORA:

A

Poem.

SON of the distant land, who dwellest in the secret cell! do I hear the sound of thy grove? or is it thy voice of songs? The torrent was loud in my ear; but I heard a tuneful voice. Dost thou praise the chiefs of thy land: or the spirits* of the wind? But, lonely dweller of rocks! look thou on that heathy plain. Thou seest green tombs, with their rank, whistling grass: with their stones of mossy heads. Thou seest them, son of the rock, but Ossian's eyes have failed.

A mountain-stream comes roaring down, and sends its waters round a green hill. Four mossy stones, in the midst of withered grass, rear their heads on the top. Two trees, which the storms have bent, spread their whistling branches around. This is thy dwelling, Erragon;† this thy narrow

* Alluding to the religious hymns of the Culdees.

† Erragon, or Ferg-thonn, signifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Ossian himself; for he goes by the name of Annir, in tradition.

house: the sound of thy shells have been long forgot in Sora. Thy shield is become dark in thy hall. Erragon, king of ships! chief of distant Sora! how hast thou fallen on our mountains? How is the mighty low? Son of the secret cell! dost thou delight in songs? Hear the battle of Lora. The sound of its steel is long since past. So thunder on the darkened hill roars and is no more. The sun returns with his silent beams. The glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains smile.

The bay of Cona received our ships* from Erin's rolling waves. Our white sheets hung loose to the masts. The boisterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven. The horn of the king is sounded; the deer start from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods. The feast of the hill is spread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran. Two heroes were forgot at our feast. The rage of their bosoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in secret. The sigh bursts from their breasts. They were seen to talk together, and to throw their spears on earth. They were two dark clouds in the midst of our joy; like pillars of mist on the settled sea. They glitter to the sun, but the mariners fear a storm.

"Raise my white sails," said Ma-ronnan, "raise them to the winds of the west. Let us rush, O Aldo! through the foam of the northern wave. We are forgot at the feast: but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and serve

* This was at Fingal's return from his war against Swaran. Cona, is evidently Campbelton. *Vide* the map. C.

the king of Sora. His countenance is fierce. War darkens around his spear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of other lands!"

They took their swords, their shields of thongs. They rushed to Lumar's resounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding steeds. Erragon had returned from the chase. His spear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground; and whistled as he went. He took the strangers to his feasts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls. From her tower looked the spouse of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma. Her yellow hair* flies on the wind of ocean. Her white breast heaves, like snow on heath; when the gentle winds arise, and slowly move it in the light. She saw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's setting sun. Her soft heart sighed. Tears filled her eyes. Her white arm supported her head. Three days she sat within the hall, and covered her grief with joy. On the fourth she fled with the hero, along the troubled sea. They came to Cona's mossy towers, to Fingal king of spears.

" Aldo of the heart of pride!" said Fingal rising in wrath: "shall I defend thee from the rage of Sora's injured king? Who will now receive my

* Here we continue to observe the same consistency and harmony of description which characterises all the other Poems of Ossian—" The yellow hair" is general to this day among the females of the ancient Scandinavia,—Norway, Sweden, &c. C.

people into their halls? Who will give the feast of strangers, since Aldo, of the little soul, has dishonoured my name in Sora? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand! Go: hide thee in thy caves. Mournful is the battle we must fight with Sora's gloomy king. Spirit of the noble Trenmor! When will Fingal cease to fight? I was born in the midst of battles,* and my steps must move in blood to the tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble in arms. I behold thy tempests, O Morven! which will overturn my halls; when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb. My renown is only in song. My deeds shall be as a dream to future times!'

His people gathered around Erragon, as the storms round the ghosts of night; when he calls them from the top of Morven, and prepares to pour them on the land of the stranger. He came to the shore of Cona. He sent his bard to the king, to demand the combat of thousands; or the land of many hills! Fingal sat in his hall with the friends of his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chase, far distant in the desert. The grey-haired chiefs talked of other times; of the actions of

* Comhal, the father of Fingal, was slain in battle, against the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fingal was born: so that he may, with propriety, be said to have been *born in the midst of battles.*

their youth; when the aged Nartmor* came, the chief of streamy Lora.

"This is no time," said Nartmor, "to hear the songs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coast, and lifts ten thousand swords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs! he is like the darkened moon, amidst the meteors of night; when they sail along her skirts, and give the light that has failed o'er her orb." "Come," said Fingal, "from thy hall, come daughter of my love: come from thy hall, Bosmina,† maid of streamy Morven! Nartmor, take the steeds of the strangers. Attend the daughter of Fingal! Let her bid the king of Sora to our feast, to Selma's shaded wall. Offer him, O Bosmina! the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo. Our youths are far distant. Age is on our trembling hands!"

She came to the host of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud. In her right hand was seen a sparkling shell. In her left an arrow of gold. The first, the joyful mark of peace! The latter, the sign of war. Erragon brightened in her presence, as a rock before the sudden beams of the sun; when they issue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind!

"Son of the distant Sora," began the mildly

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* Neart-mór, *great strength.* Lora, *noisy. M.*—Probably one of the little rivers in Argyleshire, which tumble into the sea opposite the Hebrides, where it is likely the ships of the Scandinavian king were first discovered, hovering on the coast. C.

† Bos-mhina, *soft and tender hand.* She was the youngest of Fingal's children.

blushing maid, "come to the feast of Morven's king, to Selma's shaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior! Let the dark sword rest by thy side. Chusest thou the wealth of kings? Then hear the words of generous Aldo. He gives to Erragon an hundred steeds, the children of the rein: an hundred maids from distant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly across the sky. An hundred girdles* shall also be thine, to bind high-bosomed maids. The friends of the births of heroes. The cure of the sons of toil. Ten shells studded with gems shall shine in Sora's towers: the bright water trembles on their stars, and seems to be sparkling wine. They gladdened once the kings of the world,† in the midst of their echoing halls. These, O hero! shall be thine! or thy white-bosomed spouse. Lorma shall roll her bright eyes in thy halls; though Fingal loves the generous Aldo: Fingal! who never injured a hero, though his arm is strong!"

"Soft voice of Cona!" replied the king, "tell him, he spreads his feast in vain. Let Fingal pour his spoils around me. Let him bend beneath my

* Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland; they were bound about women in labour, and were supposed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth. They were impressed with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist, was accompanied with words and gestures which shewed the custom to have come originally from the Druids.

† The Roman emperors.

power. Let him give me the swords of his fathers; the shields of other times; that my children may behold them in my halls, and say, 'These are the arms of Fingal.'" "Never shall they behold them in thy halls!" said the rising pride of the maid. "They are in the hands of heroes, who never yielded in war. King of echoing Sora! the storm is gathering on our hills. Dost thou not foresee the fall of thy people, son of the distant land?"

She came to Selma's silent halls. The king beheld her down-cast eyes. He rose from his place, in his strength. He shook his aged locks. He took the sounding mail of Trenmor, the dark-brown shield of his fathers. Darkness filled Selma's hall, when he stretched his hand to his spear: the ghosts of thousands were near, and foresaw the death of the people. Terrible joy rose in the face of the aged heroes. They rushed to meet the foe. Their thoughts are on the deeds of other years: and on the fame that rises from death!

Now at Trathal's ancient tomb the dogs of the chase appeared. Fingal knew that his young heroes followed. He stopped in the midst of his course. Oscar appeared the first; then Morni's son, and Némi's race. Fercuth* shewed his gloomy form. Dermid spread his dark hair on wind. Ossian came the last. I hummed the song of other times. My spear supported my steps over the little streams.

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* Fear-cuth, the same with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army. *M.*—This was a Patronymic of Fingal's family, from the first Fergus, who went to govern Caledonia from Ireland. *C.*

My thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal struck his bossy shield; and gave the dismal sign of war. A thousand swords at once unsheathed, gleam on the waving heath. Three grey-haired sons of song raise the tuneful mournful voice. Deep and dark with sounding steps, we rush, a gloomy ridge, along: like the shower of a storm, when it pours on a narrow vale.

The king of Morven sat on his hill. The sunbeam of battle flew on the wind. The friends of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age. Joy rose in the hero's eyes when he beheld his sons in war: when he saw us amidst the lightning of swords, mindful of the deeds of our fathers. Erragon came on, in his strength, like the roar of a winter stream. The battle falls around his steps: death dimly stalks along by his side!

"Who comes," said Fingal, "like the bounding roe! like the hart of echoing Cona? His shield glitters on his side. The clang of his armour is mournful. He meets with Erragon in the strife! Behold the battle of the chiefs! It is like the contending of ghosts in a gloomy storm. But fallest thou, son of the hill, and is thy white bosom stained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more!" The king took the spear of his strength. He was sad for the fall of Aldo. He bent his deathful eyes on the foe: but Gaul met the king of Sora. Who can relate the fight of the chiefs? The mighty stranger fell!"

"Sons of Cona!" Fingal cried aloud, "stop the hand of death. Mighty was he that is low. Much

is he mourned in Sora! The stranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is so silent. The king is fallen, O stranger. The joy of his house is ceased. Listen to the sound of his woods. Perhaps his ghost is murmuring there! But he is far distant, on Morven, beneath the sword of a foreign foe." Such were the words of Fingal, when the bard raised the song of peace. We stopped our uplifted swords. We spared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in a tomb. I raised the voice of grief. The clouds of night came rolling down. The ghost of Erragon appeared to some. His face was cloudy and dark; an half-formed sigh is in his breast. "Blest be thy soul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!"

Lorma sat in Aldo's hall. She sat at the light of a flaming oak. The night came down, but he did not return. The soul of Lorma is sad! What detains thee, hunter of Cona; thou didst promise to return. Has the deer been distant far? Do the dark winds sigh, round thee, on the heath? I am in the land of strangers, who is my friend, but Aldo? Come from thy sounding hills, O my best beloved!"

Her eyes are turned toward the gate. She listens to the rustling blast. She thinks it is Aldo's tread. Joy rises in her face! But sorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon. Wilt thou not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the east. Calm and bright is the breast of the lake! When shall I behold his dogs returning from the chase? When shall I hear his voice, loud and distant on the wind? Come

from thy sounding hills, hunter of woody Cona!" His thin ghost appeared, on a rock, like a watery beam of feeble light: when the moon rushes sudden from between two clouds, and the midnight shower is on the field! She followed the empty form over the heath. She knew that her hero fell. I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it sighs on the grass of the cave!

She came. She found her hero! Her voice was heard no more. Silent she rolled her eyes. She was pale, and wildly sad! Few were her days on Cona. She sunk into the tomb. Fingal commanded his bards: they sung over the death of Lorma. The daughters of Morven mourned her, for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned!

Son of the distant land!* Thou dwellest in the field of fame! O let thy song arise, at times, in praise of those who fell. Let their thin ghosts rejoice around thee; and the soul of Lorma come on a feeble beam:† when thou liest down to rest, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then shalt thou see her lovely; but the tear is still on her cheek!

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* The poet addresses himself to the Culdee.

† Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is past. FINGAL, B. I.

CATH-LODA:

A

Poem.

DUAN FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, when very young, making a voyage to the Orkney Islands, was driven, by stress of weather, into a bay of Scandinavia, near the residence of Starno, king of Lochlin. Starno invites Fingal to a feast. Fingal, doubting the faith of the king, and mindful of a former breach of hospitality, refuses to go.—Starno gathers together his tribes! Fingal resolves to defend himself.—Night coming on, Duth-maruno proposes to Fingal, to observe the motions of the enemy.—The king himself undertakes the watch. Advancing towards the enemy, he, accidentally, comes to the cave of Turthor, where Starno had confined Conban-carglas, the captive daughter of a neighbouring chief.—Her story is imperfect a part of the original being lost.—Fingal comes to a place of worship, where Starno and his son, Swaran, consulted the spirit of Loda, concerning the issue of the war.—The rencounter of Fingal and Swaran.—*Duan* first concludes with a description of the airy hall of Cruth-loda, supposed to be the Odin of Scandi-

CATH-LODA:

DUAN* FIRST.

A TALE of the times of old!

Why, thou wanderer unseen! Thou bender of the thistle of Lora; why, thou breeze of the valley, hast thou left mine ear? I hear no distant roar of

* The bards distinguished those compositions, in which the narration is often interrupted by episodes and apostrophes, by the name of *Duan*. Since the extinction of the order of the bards, it has been a general name for all ancient compositions in verse. The abrupt manner in which the story of this poem begins, may render it obscure to some readers; it may not therefore be improper, to give here the traditional preface, which is generally prefixed to it. Two years after he took to wife Ros-crana, the daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland, Fingal undertook an expedition into Orkney, to visit his friend Cathulla, king of Inistore. After staying a few days at Carric-thura, the residence of Cathulla, the king set sail, to return to Scotland; but, a violent storm arising, his ships were driven into a bay of Scandinavia, near Gormal, the seat of Starno, king of Lochlin, his avowed enemy. Starno, upon the appearance of strangers on his coast, summoned together the neighbouring tribes, and advanced, in a hostile manner, towards the bay of U-thorno, where Fingal had taken shelter. Upon discovering who the strangers were, and fearing the valour of Fingal, which he had, more than once, experienced before, he resolved to accomplish by treachery, what he was afraid he

streams! No sound of the harp, from the rock! Come, thou huntress of Lutha, Malvina, call back his soul to the bard. I look forward to Lochlin of lakes, to the dark, billowy bay of U-thorno, where Fingal descends from ocean, from the roar of winds. Few are the heroes of Morven, in a land unknown!

Starno sent a dweller of Loda, to bid Fingal to the feast; but the king remembered the past, and all his rage arose. "Nor Gormal's mossy towers, nor Starno, shall Fingal behold. Deaths wander, like shadows, over his fiery soul! Do I forget that beam of light, the white-handed daughter* of kings? Go, son of Loda; his words are wind to Fingal: wind that, to and fro, drives the thistle, in autumn's dusky vale. Duth-maruno,† arm of death! Crom-

should fail in by open force. He invited, therefore, Fingal to a feast, at which he intended to assassinate him. The king prudently declined to go, and Starno betook himself to arms. The sequel of the story may be learned from the poem itself.

* Agandecca, the daughter of Starno, whom her father killed, on account of her discovering to Fingal a plot laid against his life. Her story is related at large in the third book of Fingal.

† Duth-maruno is a name very famous in tradition. Many of his great actions are handed down, but the poems, which contained the detail of them, are long since lost. He lived, it is supposed, in that part of the north of Scotland which is over against Orkney. Duth-maruno, Cromma-glas Struthmar, and Cormar, are mentioned, as attending Comhal in his last battle against the tribe of Morni, in a poem, which is still preserved. It is not the work of Ossian; the phraseology betrays it to be a modern composition. It is something like those trivial compositions, which the Irish bards forged, under the name of Ossian, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

ma-glas, of iron shields! Struthmor, dweller of battle's wing! Cormar, whose ships bound on seas, careless as the course of a meteor, on dark-rolling clouds! Arise, around me, children of heroes, in a land unknown! Let each look on his shield, like Trenmor, the ruler of wars. "Come down," thus Trenmor said, "thou dweller between the harps! Thou shalt roll this stream away, or waste with me in earth."

Around the king they rise in wrath. No words come forth: they seize their spears. Each soul is rolled into itself. At length the sudden clang is waked, on all their echoing shields. Each takes his hill, by night; at intervals, they darkly stand. Unequal bursts the hum of songs, between the roaring wind!

Broad over them rose the moon!

In his arms, came tall Duth-maruno; he from Croma of rocks, stern hunter of the boar! In his dark boat he rose on waves, when Crumthormo* awaked its woods. In the chase he shone, among foes: No fear was thine, Duth-maruno!

"Son of daring Comhal, shall my steps be forward through night? From this shield shall I view them, over their gleaming tribes? Starno, king of lakes, is before me, and Swaran, the foe of strangers.

Duth-maruno signifies, *black and steady*; Cromma-glas, *bending and swarthy*; Struthmor, *roaring stream*; Cormar, *expert at sea*.

* Crumthormo, one of the Orkney or Shetland islands. The name is not of Galic original. It was subject to its own petty king, who is mentioned in one of Ossian's poems. *M*—It is Galic. *C.*

Their words are not in vain, by Loda's stone of power.—Should Duth-maruno not return, his spouse is lonely, at home, where meet two roaring streams, on Crathmo-craulo's plain. Around are hills, with echoing woods, the ocean is rolling near. My son looks on screaming sea-fowl, a young wanderer on the field. Give the head of a boar to Can-dona,*

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* Cean-daona, *head of the people*, the son of Duth-maruno He became afterwards famous, in the expeditions of Ossian, after the death of Fingal. The traditional tales concerning him are very numerous, and, from the epithet in them, bestowed on him *(Cardona of boars)*, it would appear, that he applied himself to that kind of hunting, which his father, in this paragraph, is so anxious to recommend to him. As I have mentioned the traditional tales of the Highlands, it may not be improper here to give some account of them. After the expulsion of the bards, from the houses of the chiefs, they, being an indolent race of men, owed all their subsistence to the generosity of the vulgar, whom they diverted with repeating the compositions of their predecessors, and running up the genealogies of their entertainers to the family of their chiefs. As this subject was, however, soon exhausted, they were obliged to have recourse to invention, and form stories, having no foundation in fact, which were swallowed, with great credulity, by an ignorant multitude. By frequent repeating, the fable grew upon their hands, and, as each threw in whatever circumstance he thought conducive to raise the admiration of his hearers, the story became, at last, so devoid of all probability, that even the vulgar themselves did not believe it. They, however, liked the tales so well, that the bards found their advantage in turning professed tale-makers. They then launched out into the wildest regions of fiction and romance. I firmly believe, there are more stories of giants, enchanted castles, dwarfs, and palfreys, in the Highlands, than in any country in Europe. These tales, it is certain,

tell him of his father's joy, when the bristly strength of I-thorno rolled on his lifted spear. Tell him of my deeds in war! Tell where his father fell!"

"Not forgetful of my fathers," said Fingal, "I have bounded over the seas. Theirs were the times of danger, in the days of old. Nor settles darkness on me, before foes, though youthful in my locks. Chief of Crathmo-craulo, the field of night is mine."

Fingal rushed, in all his arms, wide-bounding over Turthor's stream, that sent its sullen roar, by night, through Gormal's misty vale. A moon-beam glittered on a rock; in the midst, stood a stately form; a form with floating locks, like Lochlin's white-bosomed maids. Unequal are her steps, and short. She throws a broken song on wind. At times she tosses her white arms: for grief is dwelling in her soul.

"Torcul-torno,* of aged locks!" she said,

like other romantic compositions, have many things in them unnatural, and, consequently, disgustful to true taste, but, I know not how it happens, they command attention more than any other fictions I ever met with. The extreme length of these pieces is very surprising, some of them requiring many days to repeat them, but such hold they take of the memory, that few circumstances are ever omitted by those who have received them only from oral tradition: What is still more amazing, the very language of the bards is still preserved. It is curious to see, that the descriptions of magnificence, introduced in these tales, is even superior to all the pompous oriental fictions of the kind.

* Torcul-torno, according to tradition, was king of Crathlun, a district in Sweden. The river Lulan ran near the

"where now are thy steps, by Lulan? Thou hast failed at thine own dark streams, father of Corban-cargla! But I behold thee, chief of Lulan, sporting by Loda's hall, when the dark-skirted night is rolled along the sky.—Thou, sometimes, hidest the moon with thy shield. I have seen her dim, in heaven Thou kindlest thy hair into meteors, and sailest

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residence of Torcul-torno. There is a river in Sweden, still called *Lula*, which is probably the same with *Lulan*.* The war between Starno and Torcul-torno, which terminated in the death of the latter, had its rise at a hunting party. Starno being invited, in a friendly manner, by Torcul-torno, both kings, with their followers, went to the mountains of Stivamore, to hunt. A boar rushed from the wood before the kings, and Torcul-torno killed it. Starno thought this behaviour a breach upon the privilege of guests, who were always *honoured*, as tradition expresses it, *with the danger of the chase.* A quarrel arose, the kings came to battle, with all their attendants, and the party of Torcul-torno were totally defeated, and he himself slain. Starno pursued his victory, laid waste the district of Crathlun, and, coming to the residence of Torcul-torno, carried off, by force, Conban-carglas, the beautiful daughter of his enemy. Her he confined in a cave, near the palace of Gormal, where, on account of her cruel treatment, she became distracted.

The paragraph, just now before us, is the song of Conban-carglas, at the time she was discovered by Fingal. It is in lyric measure, and set to music, which is wild and simple, and so inimitably suited to the situation of the unhappy lady, that few can hear it without tears.

* It is remarkable that Macpherson never attempted to trace places by similar names in Ireland, where the identity would have been sooner ascertained. *C.*

along the night. Why am I forgot, in my cave, king of shaggy boars? Look, from the hall of Loda, on thy lonely daughter."

"Who art thou," said Fingal, "voice of night?"

She, trembling, turned away.

"Who art thou, in thy darkness?"

She shrunk into the cave.

The king loosed the thong from her hands. He asked about her fathers.

"Torcul-torno," she said, "once dwelt at Lulan's foamy stream: he dwelt---but, now, in Loda's hall, he shakes the sounding shell. He met Starno of Lochlin, in war; long fought the dark-eyed kings. My father fell, in his blood, blue-shielded Torcul-torno! By a rock, at Lulan's stream, I had pierced the bounding roe. My white hand gathered my hair, from off the rushing winds. I heard a noise. Mine eyes were up. My soft breast rose on high. My step was forward, at Lulan, to meet thee, Torcul-torno! It was Starno, dreadful king! His red eyes rolled on me in love. Dark waved his shaggy brow, above his gathered smile. Where is my father, I said, he that was mighty in war? Thou art left alone among foes, O daughter of Torcul-torno! He took my hand. He raised the sail. In this cave he placed me dark. At times, he comes, a gathered mist. He lifts, before me, my father's shield. But often passes a beam* of youth, far

* By *the beam of youth,* it afterwards appears, that Corban-carglas means Swaran, the son of Starno, with whom, during her confinement, she had fallen in love.

distant from my cave. The son of Starno moves in my sight. He dwells lonely in my soul."

"Maid of Lulan," said Fingal, "white-handed daughter of grief! a cloud, marked with streaks of fire, is rolled along thy soul. Look not to that dark-robed moon; look not to those meteors of heaven. My gleaming steel is around thee, the terror of thy foes! It is not the steel of the feeble, nor the dark in soul! The maids are not shut in our* caves of streams. They toss not their white arms alone. They bend, fair within their locks, above the harps of Selma. Their voice is not in the desert wild. We melt along the pleasing song!"

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Fingal, again, advanced his step, wide through the bosom of night, to where the trees of Loda shook amid squally winds. Three stones, with heads of moss, are there; a stream with foaming course: and dreadful rolled around them, is the dark red cloud of Loda. High from its top looked forward a ghost, half formed of the shadowy smoke. He poured his voice, at times, amidst the roaring

* From this contrast, which Fingal draws, between his own nation and the inhabitants of Scandinavia, we may learn, that the former were much less barbarous than the latter. This distinction is so much observed throughout the poems of Ossian, that there can be no doubt, that he followed the real manners of both nations in his own time. At the close of the speech of Fingal, there is a great part of the original lost.

stream. Near, bending beneath a blasted tree, two heroes received his words: Swaran of lakes, and Starno foe of strangers. On their dun shields they darkly leaned: their spears are forward through night. Shrill sounds the blast of darkness, in Starno's floating beard.

They heard the tread of Fingal. The warriors rose in arms. "Swaran, lay that wanderer low," said Starno, in his pride. "Take the shield of thy father. It is a rock in war." Swaran threw his gleaming spear. It stood fixed in Loda's tree. Then came the foes forward, with swords. They mixed their rattling steel. Through the thongs of Swaran's shield rushed the blade* of Luno. The shield fell rolling on earth. Cleft the helmet† fell down. Fingal stopped the lifted steel. Wrathful stood Swaran, unarmed. He rolled his silent eyes; he threw his sword on earth. Then slowly stalking over the stream, he whistled as he went.

Nor unseen of his father is Swaran. Starno turns away in wrath. His shaggy brows wave dark, above his gathered rage. He strikes Loda's tree with his spear. He raises the hum of songs. They came to the host of Lochlin, each in his own dark path; like two foam-covered streams, from two rainy vales!

* The sword of Fingal, so called from its maker, Luno of Lochlin.

† The helmet of Swaran. The behaviour of Fingal is always consistent with that generosity of spirit which belongs to a hero. He takes no advantage of a foe disarmed.

To Turthor's plain Fingal returned. Fair rose the beam of the east. It shone on the spoils of Lochlin in the hand of the king. From her cave came forth, in her beauty, the daughter of Torcul-torno. She gathered her hair from wind. She wildly raised her song. The song of Lulan of shells, where once her father dwelt. She saw Starno's bloody shield. Gladness rose, a light on her face. She saw the cleft helmet of Swaran.* She shrunk, darkened, from Fingal.---"Art thou fallen, by thy hundred streams, O love of the mournful maid!"

U-thorno, that risest in waters! on whose side are the meteors of night! I behold the dark moon descending, behind thy resounding woods. On thy top dwells the misty Loda: the house of the spirits of men! In the end of his cloudy hall, bends forward Cruth-loda of swords. His form is dimly seen, amid his wavy mist. His right hand is on his shield. In his left is the half-viewless shell. The roof of his dreadful hall is marked with nightly fires!

The race of Cruth-loda advance, a ridge of form-

* Corban-carglas, from seeing the helmet of Swaran bloody in the hands of Fingal, conjectured that that hero was killed. A part of the original is lost. It appears, however, from the sequel of the poem, that the daughter of Torcul-torno did not long survive her surprise, occasioned by the supposed death of her lover The description of the airy hall of Loda. which is supposed to be the same with that of Odin, the deity of Scandinavia, is more picturesque and descriptive, than any in the Edda, or other works of the northern Scalders.

less shades. He reaches the sounding shell, to those who shone in war. But, between him and the feeble, his shield rises, a darkened orb. He is a setting meteor to the weak in arms. Bright, as a rainbow on streams, came Lulan's white-bosomed maid.

CATH-LODA:

A Poem.

DUAN SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal returning with day, devolves the command on Duth-maruno, who engages the enemy, and drives them over the stream of Turthor. Having recalled his people, he congratulates Duth-maruno on his success, but discovers, that that hero had been mortally wounded in the action.—Duth-maruno dies. Ullin, the bard, in honour of the dead, introduces the episode of Colgorm and Strinadona, which concludes this *duän*.

Here it is to be understood, to the honour of Ireland, that the *Bard Ullin*—or Ulster—took his name from *that* part of Ireland, of which he was a native. Being at first attached to the House of Connor, on its extinction, he appears to have renounced his country for the friendship of Fingal. This is merely noted, to show that Ireland has some claim upon the Poems generally ascribed to Ossian,—more, indeed, than Macpherson would allow her, and more than would be credited if told to the World. C.

CATH-LODA

DUAN SECOND.

"WHERE art thou, son of the king?" said dark-haired Duth-maruno. "Where hast thou failed, young beam of Selma? He returns not from the bosom of night! Morning is spread on U-thorno. In his mist is the sun on his hill. Warriors, lift the shields, in my presence. He must not fall, like a fire from heaven, whose place is not marked on the ground. He comes, like an eagle, from the skirt of his squally wind! In his hand are the spoils of foes. King of Selma, our souls were sad!"

"Near us are the foes, Duth-maruno. They come forward, like waves in mist, when their foamy tops are seen, at times, above the low-sailing vapour. The traveller shrinks on his journey; he knows not whither to fly. No trembling travellers are we! Sons of heroes call forth the steel. Shall the sword of Fingal arise, or shall a warrior lead?"

* The deeds of old, said Duth-maruno, are like

* In this short episode we have a very probable account given us, of the origin of monarchy in Caledonia. The *Caël* or Gauls, who possessed the countries to the north of the Frith of Edinburgh, were, originally, a number of distinct tribes,

paths to our eyes, O Fingal! Broad-shielded Trenmor is still seen, amidst his own dim years. Nor feeble was the soul of the king. There, no dark deed wandered in secret. From their hundred streams came the tribes, to grassy Colglan-crona. Their chiefs were before them. Each strove, to lead the war. Their swords were often half-unsheathed. Red rolled their eyes of rage. Separate they stood, and hummed their surly songs. "Why

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or clans, each subject to its own chief, who was free and independent of any other power. When the Romans invaded them, the common danger might, perhaps, have induced those *reguli* to join together; but, as they were unwilling to yield to the command of one of their own number, their battles were ill conducted, and consequently, unsuccessful. Trenmor was the first who represented to the chiefs, the bad consequences of carrying on their wars in this irregular manner, and advised that they themselves should alternately lead in battle. They did so, but they were unsuccessful. When it came to Trenmor's turn, he totally defeated the enemy, by his superior valour and conduct, which gained him such an interest among the tribes, that he, and his family after him, were regarded as kings; or, to use the poet's expression, *the words of power rushed forth from Selma of kings.* The regal authority, however, except in time of war, was but inconsiderable; for every chief, within his own district, was absolute and independent. From the scene of the battle in this episode (which was in the valley of Crona, a little to the north of Agricola's wall), I should suppose, that the enemies of the Caledonians were the Romans, or provincial Britons. *M.*

These observations are highly probable, as Trenmor, chief of Morven, from his insular territory, was less annoyed than the border chiefs, consequently better enabled to resist the Romans, or make successful attacks upon them. *C.*

should they yield to each other? their fathers were equal in war." Trenmor was there, with his people, stately in youthful locks. He saw the advancing foe. The grief of his soul arose. He bade the chiefs to lead, by turns: they led, but they were rolled away. From his own mossy hill, blue-shielded Trenmor came down. He led wide-skirted battle, and the strangers failed. Around him the dark-browed warriors came: they struck the shield of joy. Like a pleasant gale, the words of power rushed forth from Selma of kings. But the chiefs led, by turns, in war, till mighty danger rose: then was the hour of the king to conquer in the field.

"Not unknown," said Cromma-glass* of shields,

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* In tradition, this Cromma-glass makes a great figure in that battle which Comhal lost, together with his life, to the tribe of Morni. I have just now in my hands, an Irish composition, of very modern date, as appears from the language, in which all the traditions, concerning that decisive engagement, are jumbled together. In justice to the merit of the poem, I should have here presented to the reader a translation of it, did not the bard mention some circumstances very ridiculous, and others altogether indecent. Morna, the wife of Comhal, had a principal hand in all the transactions previous to the defeat and death of her husband; she, to use the words of the bard, *who was the guiding star of the women of Erin*. The bard, it is to be hoped, misrepresented the ladies of his country, for Morna's behaviour was, according to him, so void of all decency and virtue, that it cannot be supposed, they had chosen her for their *guiding star*. The poem consists of many stanzas. The language is figurative, and the numbers harmonious; but the piece is so full of anachronisms, and so unequal in its compositions, that the author, most undoubtedly, was either mad, or drunk, when he wrote it. It is worthy of

" are the deeds of our fathers. But who shall now lead the war, before the race of kings? Mist settles on these four dark hills: within it let each warrior strike his shield. Spirits may descend in darkness, and mark us for the war."

They went, each to his hill of mist. Bards marked the sounds of the shields. Loudest rung thy boss, Duth-maruno. Thou must lead in war!

Like the murmur of waters, the race of U-thorno came down. Starno led the battle, and Swaran of stormy isles. They looked forward from iron shields, like Cruth-loda fiery-eyed, when he looks from behind the darkened moon, and strews his signs on night. The foes met by Turthor's stream. They heaved like ridgy waves. Their echoing strokes are mixed. Shadowy death flies over the hosts. They were clouds of hail, with squally winds in their skirts. Their showers are roaring together. Below them swells the dark-rolling deep.

Strife of gloomy U-thorno, why should I mark thy wounds! Thou art with the years that are gone: thou fadest on my soul!

Starno brought forward his skirt of war, and Swaran his own dark wing. Nor a harmless fire is Duth-maruno's sword. Lochlin is rolled over her

being remarked, that Comhal is, in this poem, very often called, *Comhal na h'Albin*, or *Comhal of Albion*, which sufficiently demonstrates, that the allegations of Keating and O'Flaherty, concerning *Fion Mac-Comnal*, are but of late invention. *M.*— On reading over the Psalters of Tara and Cashel, we discover so much exaggeration and romance, that Credulity itself becomes a sceptic, and acknowledges the propriety with which Machpherson treats some of the Irish bards. *C.*

streams. The wrathful kings are lost in thought. They roll their silent eyes, over the flight of their land. The horn of Fingal was heard; the sons of woody Albion returned. But many lay, by Turthor's stream, silent in their blood.

"Chief of Crathmo," said the king, "Duth-maruno, hunter of boars! not harmless returns my eagle from the field of foes! For this white-bosomed Lanul shall brighten, at her streams; Candona shall rejoice, as he wanders in Crathmo's fields."

"Colgorm,"* replied the chief, "was the first of my race in Albion; Colgorm, the rider of ocean, through its watry vales. He slew his brother in I-thorno:† he left the land of his fathers. He chose his place, in silence, by rocky Crathmo-craulo. His race came forth, in their years; they came forth to war, but they always fell. The wound of my fathers are mine, king of echoing isles!

"He drew an arrow from his side! He fell pale, in a land unknown. His soul came forth to his

* The family of Duth-maruno, it appears, came originally from Scandinavia, or, at least, from some of the northern isles, subject, in chief, to the kings of Lochlin. The Highland senachies, who never missed to make their comments on, and additions to, the works of Ossian, have given us a long list of the ancestors of Duth-maruno, and a particular account of their actions, many of which are of the marvellous kind. One of the tale makers of the north has chosen for his hero, Starnmor, the father of Duth-maruno, and, considering the adventures through which he has led him, the piece is neither disagreeable, nor abounding with that kind of fiction which shocks credibility.

† An island of Scandinavia.

fathers, to their stormy isle. There they pursued boars of mist, along the skirts of winds. The chiefs stood silent around, as the stones of Loda, on their hill. The traveller sees them, through the twilight, from his lonely path. He thinks them the ghosts of the aged, forming future wars.

"Night came down, on U-thorno. Still stood the chiefs in their grief. The blast whistled, by turns, through every warrior's hair. Fingal, at length, broke forth from the thoughts of his soul. He called Ullin of harps, and bade the song to rise. "No falling fire, that is only seen, and then retires in night; no departing meteor was he that is laid so low. He was like the strong-beaming sun, long rejoicing on his hill. Call the names of his fathers, from their dwellings old!"

I-thorno,* said the bard, that risest midst ridgy seas! Why is thy head so gloomy, in the ocean's mist? from thy vales came forth a race, fearless as

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* This episode is, in the original, extremely beautiful. It is set to that wild kind of music, which some of the Highlanders distinguish by the title of *Fón Oimarra*, or the *Song of Mermaids*. Some part of the air is absolutely infernal, but there are many returns in the measure, which are inexpressibly wild and beautiful. From the genius of the music, I should think it came originally from Scandinavia, for the fictions delivered down concerning the *Oi-marra*—who are reputed the authors of the music,—exactly correspond with the notions of the northern nations, concerning their *diræ*, or *goddesses of death*.—Of all the names in this episode, there is one of a Gaelic original, except Strina-dona, which signifies, the *strife of heroes*.

thy strong-winged eagles; the race of Colgorm, of iron shields, dwellers of Loda's hall.

In Tormoth's resounding isle, arose Lurthan, streamy hill. It bent its woody head over a silent vale. There, at foamy Cruruth's source, dwelt Rurmar, hunter of boars! His daughter was fair as a sun-beam, white-bosomed Strina-dona!

Many a king of heroes, and hero of iron shields; many a youth of heavy locks came to Rurmár's echoing hall. They came to woo the maid, the stately huntress of Tormoth, wild. But thou lookest careless from thy steps, high-bosomed Strina-dona!

If on the heath she moved, her breast was whiter than the down of Cana;* if on the sea-beat shore, than the foam of the rolling ocean. Her eyes were two stars of light. Her face was heaven's bow in showers. Her dark hair flowed round it, like the streaming clouds. Thou wert the dweller of souls, white-handed Strina-dona!

Colgorm came, in his ship, and Corcul-suran, king of shells. The brothers came, from I-thorno, to woo the sun-beam of Tormoth wild. She saw them in their echoing steel. Her soul was fixed on blue-eyed Colgorm. Ul-lochlin's† nightly eye looked in, and saw the tossing arms of Strina-dona.

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* The *Cana* is a certain kind of grass, which grows plentifully in the heathy morasses of the north. Its stalk is of the reedy kind, and it carries a tuft of down, very much resembling cotton. It is excessively white, and, consequently, often introduced by the bards, in their similes concerning the beauty of women.

† Ul-lochlin, *the guide to Lochlin*; the name of a star

Wrathful the brothers frowned. Their flaming eyes, in silence, met. They turned away, they struck their shields. Their hands were trembling on their swords. They rushed into the strife of heroes, for long-haired Strina-dona.

Corcul-suran fell in blood. On his isle raged the strength of his father. He turned Colgorm from I-thorno, to wander on all the winds. In Crathmo-craulo's rocky field, he dwelt by a foreign stream. Not darkened the king alone, that beam of light was near, the daughter of echoing Tormoth, white-armed Strina-dona.*

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* The continuation of this episode is just now in my hands; but the language is so different from, and the ideas so unworthy of, Ossian, that I have rejected it, as an interpolation by a modern bard.

CATH-LODA

Poem.

DUAN THIRD.

ARGUMENT

OSSIAN, after some general reflections, describes the situation of Fingal, and the position of the army of Lochlin.—The conversation of Starno and Swaran.—The episode of Corman-trunar and Foinar-brâgal.—Starno, from his own example, recommends to Swaran, to surprise Fingal, who had retired alone to a neighbouring hill. Upon Swaran's refusal, Starno undertakes the enterprise himself, is overcome, and taken prisoner, by Fingal.—He is dismissed after a severe reprimand for his cruelty.

CATH-LODA:

DUAN THIRD.

WHENCE is the stream of years? Whither do they roll along? Where have they hid, in mist, their many-coloured sides?

I look into the times of old, but they seem dim to Ossian's eyes, like reflected moon-beams, on a distant lake. Here rise the red beams of war! There, silent, dwells a feeble race! They mark no years with their deeds, as slow they pass along. Dweller between the shields! thou that awakest the failing soul! descend from thy wall, harp of Cona, with thy voices three! Come with that which kindles the past: rear the forms of old, on their own dark-brown years!

*U-thorno, hill of storms, I behold my race on

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* The bards, who were always ready to supply what they thought deficient in the poems of Ossian, have inserted a great many incidents between the second and third *duan* of Cath-loda. Their interpolations are so easily distinguished from the genuine remains of Ossian, that it took me very little time to mark them out, and totally to reject them. If the modern Scotch and Irish bards have shewn any judgment, it is in ascribing their own compositions to names of antiquity, for,

thy side. Fingal is bending, in night, over Duthmaruno's tomb. Near him are the steps of his heroes, hunters of the boar. By Turthor's stream the host of Lochlin is deep in shades. The wrathful kings stood on two hills; they looked forward from their bossy shields. They looked forward to the stars of night, red-wandering in the west. Cruth-loda bends from high, like a formless meteor in clouds. He sends abroad the winds, and marks them with his signs. Starno foresaw, that Morven's king was not to yield in war.

He twice struck the tree in wrath. He rushed before his son. He hummed a surly song? and

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by that means, they themselves have escaped that contempt, which the authors of such futile performances must necessarily have met with, from people of true taste. I was led into this observation, by an Irish poem, just now before me. It concerns a descent made by Swaran, king of Lochlin, on Ireland, and is the work, says the traditional preface prefixed to it, of *Ossian Mac-Fion.* It however appears, from several pious ejaculations, that it was rather the composition of some good priest, in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, for he speaks, with great devotion, of pilgrimage, and more particularly, of the *blue-eyed daughters of the convent.* Religious, however, as this poet was, he was not altogether decent, in the scenes he introduces between Swaran and the wife of *Congcullion,* both of whom he represents as giants. It happening, unfortunately, that *Congcullion* was only of a moderate stature, his wife, without hesitation, preferred Swaran, as a more adequate match for her own gigantic size. From this fatal preference proceeded so much mischief, that the good poet altogether lost sight of his principal action, and he ends the piece, with advice to men, in the choice of their wives, which, however good it may be, I shall leave concealed in the obscurity of the original.

heard his hair in wind. Turned* from one another they stood, like two oaks, which different winds had bent; each hangs over its own loud rill, and shakes its boughs in the course of blasts.

"Annir," said Starno of lakes, "was a fire that consumed of old. He poured death from his eyes, along the striving fields. His joy was in the fall of men. Blood to him was a summer stream, that brings joy to withered vales, from its own mossy rock. He came forth to the lake Luth-cormo, to meet the tall Corman-trunar, he from Urlor of streams, dweller of battle's wing."

The chief of Urlor had come to Gormal, with his dark-bosomed ships. He saw the daughter of Annir, white-armed Foina-bragal. He saw her! Nor careless rolled her eyes, on the rider of stormy waves. She fled to his ship in darkness, like a moonbeam through a mighty vale. Annir pursued along the deep; he called the winds of heaven. Nor alone was the king! Starno was by his side. Like U-thorno's young eagle, I turned my eyes on my father.

We rushed into roaring Urlor. With his people came tall Corman-trunar. We fought; but the foe

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* The surly attitude of Starno and Swaran is well adapted to their fierce and uncomplying dispositions. Their characters, at first sight, seem little different; but, upon examination, we find that the poet has dexterously distinguished between them. They were both dark, stubborn, haughty, and reserved; but Starno was cunning, revengeful, and cruel, to the highest degree; the disposition of Swaran, though savage, was less bloody, and somewhat tinctured with generosity. It is doing injustice to Ossian, to say, that he has not a great variety of characters.

prevailed. In his wrath my father stood. He lopped the young trees, with his sword. His eyes rolled red in his rage. I marked the soul of the king, and I retired in night. From the field I took a broken helmet: a shield that was pierced with steel: pointless was the spear in my hand. I went to find the foe.

On a rock sat tall Corman-trunar, beside his burning oak; and near him, beneath a tree, sat deep-bosomed Foina-brâgal. I threw my broken shield before her. I spoke the words of peace. "Beside his rolling sea, lies Annir of many lakes. The king was pierced in battle; and Starno is to raise his tomb. Me, a son of Loda, he sends to white-handed Foina, to bid her send a lock from her hair, to rest with her father, in earth. And thou king of roaring Urlor, let the battle cease, till Annir receive the shell, from fiery-eyed Cruth-loda.

* Bursting into tears, she rose, and tore a lock from her hair; a lock which wandered, in the blast, along her heaving breast. Corman-trunar gave the shell; and bade me to rejoice before him. I rested in the shade of night; and hid my face in

* Ossian is very partial to the fair sex. Even the daughter of the cruel Annir, the sister of the revengeful and bloody Starno, partakes not of those disagreeable characters so peculiar to her family. She is altogether tender and delicate. Homer, of all ancient poets, uses the sex with least ceremony. His cold contempt is even worse than the downright abuse of the moderns; for to draw abuse implies the possession of some merit.

my helmet deep. Sleep descended on the foe. I rose, like a stalking ghost. I pierced the side of Corman-trunar. Nor did Foina-brâgal escape. She rolled her white bosom in blood.

Why then, daughter of heroes, didst thou wake my rage?

Morning rose. The foe were fled, like the departure of mist. Annir struck his bossy shield. He called his dark-haired son. I came, streaked with wandering blood: thrice rose the shout of the king, like the bursting forth of a squall of wind from a cloud, by night. We rejoiced, three days, above the dead, and called the hawks of heaven. They came, from all their winds, to feast on Annir's foes. Swaran! Fingal is alone,* on his hill of night. Let thy spear pierce the king in secret; like Annir, my soul shall rejoice.

"Son of Annir," said Swaran, "I shall not slay in shades. I move forth in light: the hawks rush from all their winds. They are wont to trace my course: it is not harmless through war."

Burning rose the rage of the king. He thrice raised his gleaming spear. But, starting, he spared his son; and rushed into the night. By Turthor's stream a cave is dark, the dwelling of Conban-carglas. There he laid the helmet of kings, and

* Fingal, according to the custom of the Caledonian kings, had retired to a hill alone, as he himself was to resume the command of the army the next day. Starno might have some intelligence of the king's retiring, which occasions his request to Swaran, to stab him; as he foresaw, by his art of divination, that he could not overcome him in open battle.

called the maid of Lulan; but she was distant far, in Loda's resounding hall.

Swelling in his rage, he strode, to where Fingal lay alone. The king was laid on his shield, on his own secret hill.

Stern hunter of shaggy boars! no feeble maid is laid before thee. No boy, on his ferny bed, by Turthor's murmuring stream. Here is spread the couch of the mighty, from which they rise to deeds of death! Hunter of shaggy boars, awaken not the terrible!

Starno came murmuring on. Fingal arose in arms. "Who art thou, son of night?" Silent he threw the spear. They mixed their gloomy strife. The shield of Starno fell, cleft in twain. He is bound to an oak. The early beam arose. It was then Fingal beheld the king. He rolled awhile his silent eyes. He thought of other days, when white-bosomed Agandecca moved like the music of songs. He loosed the thong from his hands. Son of Annir, he said, retire. Retire to Gormal of shells; a beam that was set returns. I remember thy white-bosomed daughter; dreadful king away! Go to thy troubled dwelling, cloudy foe of the lovely! Let the stranger shun thee, thou gloomy in the hall!

A tale of the times of old!

COMALA:

A

Dramatic Poem.

ARGUMENT.

This poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Ossian's compositions. The Caracul mentioned here is the same with Caracalla the son of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition against the Caledonians. The variety of the measure shews that the poem was originally set to music, and perhaps presented before the chiefs upon solemn occasions. Tradition has handed down the story more complete than it is in the poem. "Comala, the daughter of Sarno, King of Inistore, or Orkney Islands, fell in love with Fingal the son of Comhal at a feast, to which her father had invited him, [Fingal, B. III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her passion was so violent, that she followed him, disguised like a youth, who wanted to be employed in his wars. She was soon discovered by Hidallan, the son of Lamor, one of Fingal's heroes, whose love she had slighted some time before. Her romantic passion and beauty recommended her so much to the King, that he had resolved to make her his wife;* when news was brought him of Caracul's expedition. He marched to stop the progress of the enemy, and Comala attended him. He left her on a hill, within sight of Caracul's army, when he himself went to battle, having previously promised, if he survived, to return that night." The sequel of the story may be gathered from the poem itself.

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* Is not this the original of Sir Walter Scott's Edith, in "The Lord of the Isles?" C.

COMALA

A

Dramatic Poem.

THE PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA,	} daughters of Morni.
HIDALLAN.	DERSAGRENA,	
COMALA.	BARDS.	

DERSAGRENA.

THE chase is over. No noise on Ardven but the torrent's roar! Daughter of Morni, come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow and take the harp. Let the night come on with songs, let our joy be great on Ardven.

MELILCOMA.*

Night comes apace, thou blue-eyed maid! grey night grows dim along the plain. I saw a deer at Crona's stream; a mossy bank he seemed through the gloom, but soon he bounded away. A meteor

* Melilcoma,—*soft-rolling eye.*

played round his branching horns! the awful faces* of other times looked from the clouds of Crona!

DERSAGRENA.†

These are the signs of Fingal's death. The king of shields is fallen! and Caracul prevails. Rise, Comala,‡ from thy rock; daughter of Sarno, rise in tears! The youth of thy love is low; his ghost is on our hills.

MELILCOMA.

There Comala sits forlorn! two grey dogs near shake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze. Her red cheek rests upon her arm, the mountain wind is in her hair. She turns her blue eyes toward the fields of his promise. Where art thou, O Fingal? the night is gathering around!

COMALA.

O Carun* of the streams! why do I behold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noise of the battle been heard; and sleeps the king of Morven? Rise, moon, thou daughter of the sky! look from

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* *Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ*
Numina magna deûm. VIRG.

———dreadful sounds I hear,
And the dire form of hostile gods appear.
DRYDEN.

† Dersagrena, *the brightness of a sun-beam.*

‡ Comala, *the maid of the pleasant brow.*

† Carun or Cara'on, *a winding river.*—This river retains still the name of Carron, and falls into the Forth some miles to the north of Falkirk.

between thy clouds, rise that I may behold the gleam of his steel, on the field of his promise. Or rather let the meteor, that lights our fathers through the night, come, with its red beam, to shew me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from sorrow? Who from the love of Hidallan? Long shall Comala look before she can behold Fingal in the midst of his host; bright as the coming forth of the morning, in the cloud of an early shower.

HIDALLAN.*

Dwell, thou mist of gloomy Crona, dwell on the path of the king! Hide his steps from mine eyes, let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are scattered, no crowding tread is round the noise of his steel. O Carun! roll thy streams of blood, the chief of the people is low.

COMALA.

Who fell on Carun's sounding banks, son of the

———*Gentesque alias cum pelleret armis*
Sedibus, aut victas vilem servaret in usum
Servitii, hic contenta suos defendere fines
Roma securigeris prætendit mœnia Scotis:
Hic spe progressus posita, Caronis ad undam
Terminus Ausonii signat divortia regni.

BUCHANAN.

* Hidallan was sent by Fingal to give notice to Comala of his return; he, to revenge himself on her for slighting his love some time before, told her that the king was killed in battle. He even pretended that he carried his body from the field to be buried in her presence; and this circumstance makes it probable that the poem was presented of old.

cloudy night? Was he white as the snow of Ardven? Blooming as the bow of the shower? Was his hair like the mist of the hill, soft and curling in the day of the sun? Was he like the thunder of heaven in battle? Fleet as the roe of the desert?

HIDALLAN.

O that I might behold his love, fair leaning from her rock! Her red eye dim in tears, her blushing cheek half hid in her locks! Blow, O gentle breeze! lift thou the heavy locks of the maid, that I may behold her white arm, her lovely cheek in her grief.

COMALA.

And is the son of Comhal fallen, chief of the mournful tale? The thunder rolls on the hill! The lightning flies on wings of fire! They frighten not Comala; for Fingal is low. Say, chief of the mournful tale, fell the breaker of the shields?

HIDALLAN.

The nations are scattered on their hills! they shall hear the voice of the king no more.

COMALA.

Confusion pursue thee over thy plains! Ruin overtake thee, thou king of the world! Few be thy steps to thy grave; and let one virgin mourn thee! Let her be like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth! Why hast thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell? I might have hoped a little while his return, I might have thought I saw him on the distant

rock; a tree might have deceived me with his appearance; the wind of the hill might have been the sound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun! that my tears might be warm on his cheek!

HIDALLAN.

He lies not on the banks of Carun: on Ardven heroes raise his tomb. Look on them, O moon! from thy clouds; be thy beam bright on his breast, that Comala may behold him in the light of his armour!

COMALA.

Stop, ye sons of the grave, till I behold my love! He left me at the chase alone. I knew not that he went to war. He said he would return with the night; the king of Morven is returned! Why didst thou not tell me that he would fall, O trembling dweller of the rock!* Thou sawest him in the blood of his youth; but thou didst not tell Comala!

MELILCOMA.

What sound is that on Ardven? Who is that bright in the vale? Who comes like the strength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?

* By *the dweller of the rock* she means a druid. It is probable that some of the order of the druids remained as late as the beginning of the reign of Fingal; and that Comala had consulted one of them concerning the event of the war with Caracul.

COMALA.

Who is it but the foe of Comala, the son of the king of the world! Ghost of Fingal; do thou from thy cloud direct Comala's bow. Let him fall like the hart of the desert. It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghosts. Why dost thou come, my love, to frighten and please my soul?

FINGAL.

Raise, ye bards, the song; raise the wars of the streamy Carun! Caracul has fled from our arms along the fields of his pride. He sets far distant like a meteor, that incloses a spirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around. I heard a voice, or was it the breeze of my hills? Is it the huntress of Ardven, the white-handed daughter of Sarno? Look from thy rocks, my love; let me hear the voice of Comala!

COMALA.

Take me to the cave of my rest, O lovely son of death!

FINGAL.

Come to the cave of my rest. The storm is past, the sun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my rest, huntress of echoing Ardven!

COMALA.

He is returned with his fame! I feel the right hand of his wars! But I must rest beside the

rock till my soul returns from my fear! O let the harp be near! raise the song, ye daughters of Morni!

DERSAGRENA.

Comala has slain three deer on Ardven, the fire ascends on the rock; go to the feast of Comala, king of the woody Morven!

FINGAL.

Raise, ye sons of song, the wars of the streamy Carun; that my white-handed maid may rejoice: while I behold the feast of my love.

BARDS.

Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled! The steed is not seen on our fields; the wings* of their pride spread in other lands. The sun will now rise in peace, and the shadows descend in joy. The voice of the chase will be heard; the shields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, our hands shall grow red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled!

MELILCOMA.

Descend, ye light mists from high! Ye moonbeams, lift her soul! Pale lies the maid at the rock! Comala is no more!

* Perhaps the poet alludes to the Roman eagle.

FINGAL.

Is the daughter of Sarno dead; the white-bosomed maid of my love? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I sit alone at the stream of my hills!

HIDALLAN.

Ceased the voice of the huntress of Ardven? Why did I trouble the soul of the maid? When shall I see thee, with joy, in the chase of the dark-brown hinds?

FINGAL.

Youth of the gloomy brow! no more shalt thou feast in my halls. Thou shalt not pursue my chase, my foes shall not fall by thy sword.* Lead me to the place of her rest that I may behold her beauty. Pale she lies at the rock, the cold winds lift her hair. Her bow-string sounds in the blast, her arrow was broken in her fall. Raise the praise of the daughter of Sarno! give her name to the winds of heaven!

BARDS.

See! meteors gleam around the maid! See! moon-beams lift her soul! Around her, from their clouds, bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno† of the gloomy brow! the red-rolling eyes of Fidal-

* The sequel of the story of Hidallan is introduced in another poem.

† Sarno the father of Comala died soon after the flight of his daughter. Fidallan was the first king that reigned in Inistore.

lan! When shall thy white hand arise? When shall thy voice be heard on our rocks? The maids shall seek thee on the heath, but they shall not find thee. Thou shalt come, at times, to their dreams, to settle peace in their soul. Thy voice shall remain in their ears, they shall think with joy on the dreams of their rest. Meteors gleam around the maid, and moon-beams lift her soul!

CARRIC-THURA

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, resolved to visit Cathulla, King of Inistoré, and brother to Comala, whose story is related at large in the preceding dramatic poem. Upon his coming in sight of Carrickthura, the palace of Cathulla, he observed a flame on its top, which, in those days, was a signal of distress. The wind drove him into a bay, at some distance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to pass the night on the shore. Next day he attacked the army of Frothal, King of Sora, who had besieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Frothal himself prisoner, after he had engaged him in a single combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the subject of the poem: but several other episodes are interwoven with it. It appears from tradition, that this poem was addressed to a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries, and that the story of the *Spirit of Loda*, supposed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Ossian in opposition to the Culdee's doctrine. Be this as it will, it lets us into Ossian's notions of a superior being; and shews that he was not addicted to the superstition which prevailed all the world over, before the introduction of Christianity

CARRIC-THURA

A

Poem.

HAST* thou left thy blue course in heaven, golden-haired son of the sky! The west has opened its gates; the bed of thy repose is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They see thee lovely in thy sleep; they shrink away with fear. Rest, in thy shadowy cave, O sun! let thy return be in joy.

But let a thousand lights arise to the sound of the harps of Selma: let the beam spread in the hall, the king of shells is returned! The strife of Carun, is past† like sounds that are no more. Raise the song, O bards! the king is returned, with his fame!‡

* The song of Ullin, with which the poem opens, is in a lyric measure. It was usual with Fingal, when he returned from his expeditions, to send his bards singing before him. This species of triumph is called, by Ossian, the *song of victory*.

† Ossian has celebrated the *strife of Crona*, in a particular poem. This poem is connected with it, but it was impossible for the translator to procure that part which relates to Crona, with any degree of purity.

‡ The commencement of this poem proves the Irish bard

Such were the words of Ullin, when Fingal returned from war: when he returned in the fair blushing of youth, with all his heavy locks. His blue arms were on the hero; like a light cloud on the sun, when he moves in his robes of mist, and shews but half his beams. His heroes follow the king: the feast of shells is spread. Fingal turns to his bards, and bids the song to rise.

Voices of echoing Cona! he said, O bards of other times! Ye, on whose souls the blue hosts of our fathers rise! strike the harp in my hall; and let me hear the song. Pleasant is the joy of grief!* it is like the shower of spring, when it softens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf rears its green head. Sing on, O bards! to-morrow we lift the sail. My blue course is through the ocean, to Carric-thura's walls; the mossy walls of Sarno, where Comala dwelt. There the noble Cathulla spreads the feast of shells. The boars of his woods are many; the sound of the chase shall arise!

Cronnan,† son of the song! said Ullin, Minona,

Ullin to have been but little inferior in composition to his friend Ossian. *C.*

* This sentence alone would have proved him of Irish origin!—although the beauty of the expression, and the probable meaning of the poet are justifiable, yet I fear it would not bear severe and scrutinizing criticism. *C.*

† One should think that the parts of Shilric and Vinvela were represented by Cronnan and Minona, whose very names denote that they were singers, who performed in public. Cronnan signifies *a mournful sound*, Minona, or Min-'onn, *soft air*. All the dramatic poems of Ossian appear to have been presented before Fingal, upon solemn occasions.

graceful at the harp! raise the tale of Shilric, to please the king of Morven. Let Vinvela come in her beauty, like the showery bow, when it shows its lovely head on the lake, and the setting sun is bright. She comes, O Fingal! her voice is soft but sad.

VINVELA.

My love is a son of the hill. He pursues the flying deer. His grey dogs are panting round him; his bow-string sounds in the wind. Dost thou rest by the fount of the rock, or by the noise of the mountain-stream? the rushes are nodding to the wind, the mist flies over the hill. I will approach my love unseen; I will behold him from the rock. Lovely I saw thee first by the aged oak of Branno;* thou wert returning tall from the chase; the fairest among thy friends.

SHILRIC.

What voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer wind! I sit not by the nodding rushes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela,† afar, I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I see thee, fair moving by the stream of the

* Bran, or Branno, signifies a *mountain stream*: it is here some river known by that name, in the days of Ossian. There are several small rivers in the north of Scotland still retaining the name of Bran; in particular one which falls into the Tay at Dunkeld.

† Bhin bheul, *a woman with a melodious voice*. *Bh* in the Gaelic language has the same sound with the v in English.

plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the western wave.

VINVELA.

Then thou art gone, O Shilric! I am alone on the hill! The deer are seen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed; he is in the field of graves. Strangers! sons of the waves! spare my lovely Shilric!

SHILRIC.

If fall I must in the field, raise high my grave, Vinvela. Grey stones, and heaped up earth, shall mark me to future times. When the hunter shall sit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "Some warriors rest here," he will say; and my fame shall live in his praise. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie!

VINVELA.

Yes! I will remember thee; alas! my Shilric will fall! What shall I do, my love! when thou art for ever gone? Through these hills I will go at noon: I will go through the silent heath. There I will see the place of thy rest, returning from the chase. Alas! my Shilric will fall; but I will remember Shilric.

And I remember the chief, said the king of woody Morven; he consumed the battle in his rage. But now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day, on the hill; his cheek was pale; his brow was dark. The sigh was frequent in his breast: his steps were

towards the desert. But now he is not in the crowd of my chiefs, when the sounds of my shields arise. Dwells he in the narrow house,* the chief of high Carmora ?†

Cronnan! said Ullin of other times, raise the song of Shilric; when he returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned on her grey mossy stone; he thought Vinvela lived. He saw her fair moving‡ on the plain: but the bright form lasted not: the sun-beam fled from the field, and she was seen no more. Hear the song of Shilric, it is soft but sad!

I sit by the mossy fountain; on top of the hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descends from the hill. No hunter at a distance is seen. It is mid-day: but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love! a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy bosom heaving on the sight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends! whom the mist of the hill had concealed! Thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's house!

But is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the

* The grave.

† Carn-mór, *a high rocky hill.*

‡ The distinction which the ancient Scots made between good and bad spirits, was, that the former appeared sometimes in the day-time in lonely unfrequented places, but the latter never but by night, and in a dismal gloomy scene

sun in a summer-storm, comest thou, O maid, over rocks, over mountains to me? She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the lake.

"Returnest thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love! I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric! yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? Why on the heath alone?

"Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-house. With grief for thee I fell. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb."

She fleets, she sails away; as mist before the wind! and wilt thou not stay, Vinvela? Stay and behold my tears! fair thou appearest, Vinvela! fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit; on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around, O talk with me, Vinvela! come on the light-winged gale! on the breeze of the desert, come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou passest, when mid-day is silent around!

Such was the song of Cronnan, on the night of Selma's joy. But morning rose in the east; the blue waters rolled in light. Fingal bade his sails to rise; the winds came rustling from their hills. Inistore rose to sight, and Carric-thura's mossy towers! But the sign of distress was on their top:*

* The houses of the ancient, and many of the modern, Scots

the warning flame edged with smoke. The king of Morven struck his breast; he assumed, at once, his spear. His darkened brow bends forward to the coast: he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is disordered on his back. The silence of the king is terrible!

Night came down on the sea; Rotha's bay received the ship. A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle† of Loda, the mossy stone of power! A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with grass and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The blue course of a stream is there! the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard. The flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread around: but the soul of the king is sad, for Carric-thura's Chief distrest.

The wan, cold moon rose, in the east. Sleep descended on the youths! Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fires decay. But sleep did not rest on the king: he rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of Sar[illegible]'s tower.

The flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the

and Irish, were covered with turf—as stone and lime buildings were unknown in these countries—at least in Ireland, until the Romans introduced them partially.—Hence I think "mossy towers" is a poetical phrase of the translator. *C.*

† *The circle of Loda* is supposed to be a place of worship among the Scandinavians, as the spirit of Loda is thought to be the sa[illegible] their god Odin.

mountain, on its wings was the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors,* and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high.

Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds: feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy winds and fly!

Dost thou force me from my place? replied the hollow voice. The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish: my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds: the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.

Dwell in thy pleasant fields, said the king: Let Comhal's son be forgot. Do my steps ascend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee with a spear, on thy cloud, spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on me? Why shake thine airy spear? Thou frownest in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakness of their arms!

* He is described, in a simile, in the poem concerning the death of Cuthullin.

Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind, and fly! The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The king of Sora is my son, he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, son of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath!

He lifted high his shadowy spear! He bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal, advancing, drew his sword; the blade of dark-brown Luno.* The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped, in their course, with fear: the friends of Fingal started at once; and took their heavy spears. They missed the king: they rose in rage; all their arms resound!

The moon came forth in the east. Fingal returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youth was great, their souls settled, as a sea from a storm. Ullin raised the song of gladness. The hills of Inistore rejoiced. The flame of the oak arose; and the tales of heroes are told.

But Frothal, Sora's wrathful king, sits in sadness beneath a tree. The host spreads around Carric-

* The famous sword of Fingal, made by Lun, or Luno, a smith of Lochlin.

thura. He looks towards the walls with rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who, once, overcame him in war. When Annir reigned* in Sora, the father of sea-borne Frothal, a storm arose on the sea, and carried Frothal to Innistore. Three days he feasted in Sarno's halls, and saw the slow-rolling eyes of Comala. He loved her in the flame of youth, and rushed to seize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle rose. Frothal was bound in the hall; three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno sent him to his ship, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his soul against the noble Cathulla. When Annir's stone† of fame arose, Frothal came in his strength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's mossy walls.

Morning rose on Innistore. Frothal struck his dark-brown shield. His chiefs started at the sound; they stood, but their eyes were turned to the sea. They saw Fingal coming in his strength; and first the noble Thubar spoke. "Who comes like the stag of the desert, with all his herd behind him? Frothal it is a foe! I see his forward spear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal, the first of men. His deeds are well known in Lochlin; the blood of his foes is in Starno's halls. Shall I ask

* Annir was also the father of Erragon, who was king after the death of his brother Frothal. The death of Erragon is the subject of *the battle of Lora*, a poem in this collection.

† That is, after the death of Annir. To erect the stone of one's fame, was, in other words, to say that the person was dead.

the peace* of kings? his sword is the bolt of heaven!"

"Son of the feeble hand," said Frothal, shall my days begin in a cloud? Shall I yield before I have conquered, chief of streamy Tora? The people would say in Sora, Frothal flew forth like a meteor; but a darkness has met him; and his fame is no more. No: Thubar, I will never yield; my fame shall surround me like light. No! I will never yield, chief of streamy Tora!

He went forth with the stream of his people, but they met a rock; Fingal stood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his side. Nor did they safely fly; the spear of the king pursued their steps. The field is covered with heroes. A rising hill preserved the foe.

Frothal saw their flight. The rage of his bosom rose. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar. "Thubar! my people are fled. My fame has ceased to arise. I will fight the king; I feel my burning soul! send a bard to demand the combat. Speak not against Frothal's words! But, Thubar! I love a maid; she dwells by Thano's stream, the white-bosomed daughter of Herman, Utha with soft-rolling eyes. She feared the low-laid Comala; her secret sighs rose, when I spread the sail. Tell to Utha of harps that my soul delighted in her."

Such were his words, resolved to fight. The soft sigh of Utha was near! She had followed her hero,

* Honourable terms of peace.

in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in secret, from beneath her steel. She saw the bard as he went; the spear fell thrice from her hand! Her loose hair flew on the wind. Her white breast rose, with sighs. She raised her eyes to the king. She would speak, but thrice she failed.

Fingal heard the words of the bard; he came in the strength of his steel. They mixed their deathful spears: they raised the gleam of their arms. But the sword of Fingal descended and cut Frothal's shield in twain. His fair side is exposed; half bent he foresees his death. Darkness gathered on Utha's soul. The tear rolled down her cheek. She rushed to cover the chief with her shield; but a fallen oak met her steps. She fell on her arm of snow; her shield, her helmet flew wide. Her white bosom heaved to the sight; her dark-brown hair is spread on earth.

Fingal pitied the white-armed maid! he stayed the uplifted sword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward, he spoke. "King of streamy Sora! fear not the sword of Fingal. It was never stained with the blood of the vanquished; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice by thy native streams. Let the maids of thy love be glad. Why shouldest thou fall in thy youth, king of streamy Sora?" Frothal heard the words of Fingal, and saw the rising maid: they* stood in silence in their beauty: like two young trees of the plain, when the shower of spring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

* Frothal and Utha.

Daughter of Herman, said Frothal, didst thou come from Tora streams; didst thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low? But he was low before the mighty, maid of the slow-rolling eye! The feeble did not overcome the son of car-borne Annir! Terrible art thou, O king of Morven! in battles of the spear. But, in peace, thou art like the sun, when he looks through a silent shower: the flowers lift their fair heads before him; the gales shake their rustling wings. O that thou wert in Sora! that my feast were spread! The future kings of Sora would see thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal!

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Sora's race shall be heard! When chiefs are strong in war, then does the song arise! But if their swords are stretched over the feeble: if the blood of the weak has stained their arms; the bard shall forget them in the song, and their tombs shall not be known. The stranger shall come and build there, and remove the heaped up earth. An half-worn sword shall rise before him; bending above it, he will say, "These are the arms of the chiefs of old, but their names are not in song." Come thou, O Frothal! to the feast of Inistore; let the maid of thy love be there; let our faces brighten with joy!

Fingal took his spear, moving in the steps of his might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened wide. The feast of shells is spread. The soft sound of music arose. Gladness brightened in the hall. The voice of Ullin was heard; the harp of Selma was

strung. Utha rejoiced in his presence, and demanded the song of grief; the big tear hung in her eye, when the soft Crimora* spoke. Crimora the daughter of Rinval, who dwelt at Lotha's† roaring stream! The tale was long, but lovely; and pleased the blushing Utha.

CRIMORA.‡

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the west? Whose voice is that loud as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of Carril?§ It is my love in the light of steel; but sad is his darkened brow? Live the mighty race of Fingal? or what darkens in Connal's soul?||

CONNAL.

They live. They return from the chase, like a stream of light. The sun is on their shields. Like

* There is a propriety in introducing this episode, as the situations of Crimoa and Utha were so similar.

† Lotha was the ancient name of one of the great rivers in the north of Scotland. The only one of them that still retains a name of a like sound is Lochy, in Invernessshire; but whether it is the river mentioned here, the translator will not pretend to say.

‡ Cri-móra, *a woman of a great soul.*

§ Perhaps the Carril mentioned here is the same with Carril the son of Kinfena, Cuthullin's bard. The name *itself* is proper to any bard, as it signifies *a sprightly and harmonious sound.*

|| Connal, the son of Diaran, was one of the most famous heroes of Fingal; he was slain in a battle against Dargo a Briton; but whether by the hand of the enemy, or that of his mistress, tradition does not determine.

a ridge of fire they descend the hill. Loud is the voice of the youth! the war, my love, is near! To morrow the dreadful Dargo comes to try the force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies; the race of battle and wounds!

CRIMORA.

Connal, I saw his sails like grey mist on the dark-brown wave. They slowly came to land. Connal, many are the warriors of Dargo!

CONNAL.

Bring me thy father's shield; the bossy, iron shield of Rinval; that shield like the full-orbed moon, when she moves darkened through heaven.

CRIMORA.

That shield I bring, O Connal! but it did not defend my father. By the spear of Gormar he fell. Thou may'st fall, O Connal!

CONNAL.

Fall I may! But raise my tomb, Crimora! Grey stones, a mound of earth, shall send my name to other times. Bend thy red eye over my grave, beat thy mournful heaving breast. Though fair thou art, my love, as the light; more pleasant than the gale of the hill; yet I will not here remain. Raise my tomb, Crimora!

CRIMORA.

Then give me those arms that gleam; that sword,

and that spear of steel. I shall meet Dargo with Connal, and aid him in the fight. Farewell ye rocks of Ardven! ye deer! and ye streams of the hill! We shall return no more. Our tombs are distant far!

"And did they return no more?" said Utha's bursting sigh. "Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live? Her steps were lonely; her soul was sad for Connal. Was he not young and lovely; like the beam of the setting sun?" Ullin saw the virgin's tear, he took the softly-trembling harp: the song was lovely, but sad, and silence was in Carric-thura.

Autumn is dark on the mountains; grey mist rests on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree stands alone on the hill, and marks the slumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind, and strew the grave of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the departed, when the musing hunter alone stalks slowly over the heath.

Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal! who recount thy fathers? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth. Who shall supply the place of Connal? Here was the din of arms; here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of Fingal, O Connal! It was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm; thy sword a beam of the sky; thy height a rock on the p[illegible]; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder

than a storm was thy voice, in the battles of thy steel. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy. Dargo the mighty came on, darkening in his rage. His brows were gathered into wrath. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side; loud was the clang of their steel.

The daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora bright in the armour of man; her yellow hair is loose behind, her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much-beloved. She drew the string on Dargo; but erring she pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid! He bleeds; her Connal dies! All the night long she cries, and all the day, "O Connal, my love, and my friend!" With grief the sad mourner dies! Earth here encloses the loveliest pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of the tomb; I often sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass; their memory rushes on my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of the mountain you rest alone!

"And soft be their rest," said Utha, "hapless children of streamy Lotha! I will remember them with tears, and my secret song shall rise; when the wind is in the groves of Tora, when the stream is roaring near. Then shall they come on my soul with all their lovely grief!

Three days feasted the kings: on the fourth their white sails arose. The winds of the north drove

Fingal to Morven's woody land. But the spirit of Loda sat, in his cloud, behind the ships of Frothal. He hung forward with all his blasts, and spread the white-bosomed sails. The wounds of his form were not forgot; he still feared* the hand of the king!

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* The story of Fingal and the spirit of Loda, supposed to be the famous Odin, is the most extravagant fiction in all Ossian's poems. It is not, however, without precedents in the best poets; and it must be said for Ossian, that he says nothing but what perfectly agreed with the notions of the times, concerning ghosts. They thought the souls of the dead were material, and consequently susceptible of pain. Whether a proof could be drawn from this passage, that Ossian had no notion of a divinity, I shall leave to others to determine: it appears, however, that he was of opinion, that superior beings ought to take no notice of what passed among men.

CARTHON:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

This poem is complete, and the subject of it, as of most of Ossian's compositions, tragical. In the time of Comhal, the son of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Clessámmor, the son of Thaddu and brother of Morna, Fingal's mother, was driven by a storm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which stood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hospitably received by Reuthámir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina his only daughter in marriage. Reuda, the son of Cormo, a Briton who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthámir's house, and behaved haughtily towards Clessámmor. A quarrel ensued, in which Reuda was killed; the Britons, who attended him, pressed so hard on Clessámmor, that he was obliged to throw himself into the Clyde, and swim to his ship. He hoisted sail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to sea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night; but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to desist.

Moina, who had been left with child by her husband, brought forth a son, and died soon after.—Reuthámir named the child Carthon, *i. e. the murmur of waves*, from the storm which carried off Clessámmor his father, who was supposed to have been cast away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal the father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions against the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthámir was killed in the attack; and Carthon was carried safe away by his nurse, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man's estate, was resolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha on Comhal's posterity. He set sail, from the Clyde, and falling on the coast of Morven, defeated two of Fingal's heroes, who came to oppose his progress. He was, at last, unwittingly killed by his father Clessámmor, in a single combat. This story is the foundation of the present poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon, so that what passed before is introduced by way of episode. The poem is addressed to Malvina the daughter of Toscar.

CARTHON:

Poem.

A TALE of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years!

The murmur of thy streams, O Lora!* brings back the memory of the past. The sound of thy woods, Garmaller, is lovely in mine ear. Dost thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged pines bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the flower of the mountain grows, and shakes its white head in the breeze. The thistle is there alone, shedding its aged beard. Two stones half sunk in the ground, shew their heads of moss. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds a dim ghost standing there.* The mighty lie, O Malvina! in the narrow plain of the rock.

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* There is a mountain in the north of Ireland near the seat of Lady Antrim—now called Don-Lora—i. e. *Hill* of Lora. *C.*

† It was the opinion of the times, that deer saw the ghosts of the dead. To this day, when beasts suddenly start without any apparent cause, the vulgar think that they see the spirits of the deceased.

A tale of the times of old! the deeds of days of other years!

Who comes from the land of strangers, with his thousands around him? the sun-beam pours its bright stream before him; his hair meets the wind of his hills. His face is settled from war. He is calm as the evening beam that looks, from the cloud of the west, on Cona's silent vale. Who is it but Comhal's son,* the king of mighty deeds! He beholds his hills with joy, he bids a thousand voices rise. "Ye have fled over your fields, ye sons of the distant land! The king of the world sits in his hall, and hears of his people's flight. He lifts his red eye of pride; he takes his father's sword. Ye have fled over your fields, sons of the distant land!

Such were the words of the bards, when they came to Selma's halls. A thousand lights† from the stranger's land rose, in the midst of the people. The feast is spread around; the night passed away in joy. Where is the noble Clèssámmor?‡ said the fair-haired Fingal. Where is the brother of Morna, in the hour of my joy? Sullen and dark he passes his days in the vale of echoing Lora: but, behold, he comes from the hill, like a steed in his strength, who finds his companions in the breeze; and tosses

* Fingal returns here, from an expedition against the Romans, which was celebrated by Ossian in a poem called *the Strife of Crona*.

† Probably wax lights, which are often mentioned as carried, among other booty, from the Roman province.

‡ Clessamh-mór, *mighty deeds*.

his bright mane in the wind. Blest be the soul of Clessámmor, why so long from Selma?

Returns the chief, said Clessámmor, in the midst of his fame? Such was the renown of Comhal in the battles of his youth. Often did we pass over Carun to the land of the strangers; our swords returned, not unstained with blood: nor did the kings of the world rejoice. Why do I remember the times of our war? My hair is mixed with grey. My hand forgets to bend the bow: I lift a lighter spear. O that my joy would return, as when I first beheld the maid; the white-bosomed daughter of strangers, Moina,* with the dark blue eyes!

Tell, said the mighty Fingal, the tale of thy youthful days. Sorrow, like a cloud on the sun, shades the soul of Clessámmor. Mournful are thy thoughts alone, on the banks of the roaring Lora. Let us hear the sorrow of thy youth and the darkness of thy days!

"It was in the days of peace," replied the great Clessámmor, "I came in my bounding ship, to Balclutha's† walls of towers. The winds had roared behind my sails, and Clutha's‡ streams received my

* Moina, *soft in temper and person.* We find the British names in this poem derived from the Gaelic, which is a proof that the ancient language of the whole island was one and the same.

† Balclutha, *i. e. the town of Clyde*, probably the *Alcluth* of Bede.

‡ Clutha, or Cluath, the Gaelic name of the river Clyde; the signification of the word is *bending*, in allusion to the winding course of that river. From Clutha is derived its Latin name, Glotta.

dark-bosomed ship. Three days I remained in Reuthámir's halls, and saw his daughter, that beam of light. The joy of the shell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breasts were like foam on the wave, and her eyes like stars of light: her hair was dark as the raven's wing: he soul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great: my heart poured forth in joy.

"The son of a stranger came; a chief who loved the white-bosomed Moina. His words were mighty in the hall; he often half-unsheathed his sword. Where, said he, is the mighty Comhal, the restless wanderer* of the heath? Comes he, with his host, to Balclutha, since Clessámmor is so bold? My soul, I replied, O warrior! burns in a light of its own. I stand without fear in the midst of thousands, though the valiant are distant far. Stranger! thy words are mighty, for Clessámmor is alone. But my sword trembles by my side, and longs to glitter in my hand. Speak no more of Comhal, son of the winding Clutha!

"The strength of his pride arose. We fought; he fell beneath my sword. The banks of Clutha heard his fall; a thousand spears glittered around. I fought: the strangers prevailed; I plunged into the stream of Clutha. My white sails rose over the waves, and I bounded on the dark-blue sea. Moina came to the shore, and rolled the red eye of her

* The word in the original here rendered by *restless wanderer* is *Scuta*, which is the true origin of the *Scoti* of the Romans; an opprobrious name imposed by the Britons, on the Caledonians, on account of the continual incursions into their country.

tears: her loose hair flew on the wind; and I heard her mournful, distant cries. Often did I turn my ship; but the winds of the east prevailed. Nor Clutha ever since have I seen, nor Moina of the dark brown hair. She fell in Balclutha, for I have seen her ghost. I knew her as she came through the dusky night, along the murmur of Lora: she was like the new moon, seen through the gathered mist; when the sky pours down its flaky snow, and the world is silent and dark."

Raise,* ye bards, said the mighty Fingal, the praise of unhappy Moina. Call her ghost, with your songs, to our hills; that she may rest with the fair of Morven, the sun-beams of other days, the delight of heroes of old. I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls: and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place, by the fall of the walls. The thistle shook, there, its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round its head. Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house of her fathers. Raise the song of mourning, O bards! over the land of strangers. They have but

* The title of this poem, in the original, is *Duan na nlaoi*, *i. e. The Poem of the Hymns*: probably on account of its many digressions from the subject, all which are in a lyric measure, as this song of Fingal. Fingal is celebrated by the Irish historians for his wisdom in making laws, his poetical genius, and his foreknowledge of events. O'Flaherty goes so far as to say, that Fingal's laws were extant in his own time.

fallen before us: for, one day, we must fall. Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield. And let the blast of the desert come! we shall be renowned in our day! The mark of my arm shall be in battle; my name in the song of bards. Raise the song; send round the shell: let joy be heard in my hall. When thou, sun of heaven, shalt fail! if thou shalt fail, thou mighty light! if thy brightness is for a season, like Fingal; our fame shall survive thy beams!

Such was the song of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thousand bards leaned forward from their seats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the music of harps on the gale of the spring. Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Ossian the strength of thy soul? But thou standest alone, my father! who can equal the king of Selma?

The night passed away in song; morning returned in joy. The mountains shewed their grey heads; the blue face of ocean smiled. The white wave is seen tumbling round the distant rock; a mist rose slowly, from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the silent plain. Its large limbs did not move in steps; for a ghost supported it in mid-air. It came towards Selma's hall, and dissolved in a shower of blood.

The king alone beheld the sight; he foresaw the death of the people. He came, in silence, to his hall; and took his father's spear. The mail rattled

on his breast. The heroes rose around. They looked in silence, on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. They saw battle in his face: the death of armies on his spear. A thousand shields, at once, are placed on their arms; they drew a thousand swords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms ascends. The grey dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs. Each marked the eyes of the king; and half assumed his spear.

Sons of Morven, begun the king, this is no time to fill the shell. The battle darkens near us; death hovers over the land. Some ghost, the friend of Fingal, has forewarned us of the foe. The sons of the stranger come from the darkly-rolling sea. For, from the water, came the sign of Morven's gloomy danger. Let each assume his heavy spear, each gird on his father's sword. Let the dark helmet rise on every head; the mail pour its lightning from every side. The battle gathers like a storm; soon shall ye hear the roar of death.

The hero moved on before his host, like a cloud before a ridge of green fire; when it pours on the sky of night, and mariners foresee a storm. On Cona's rising heath they stood: the white-bosomed maids beheld them above like a grove; they foresaw the death of the youth, and looked towards the sea with fear. The white wave deceived them for distant sails; the tear is on their cheek! The sun rose on the sea, and we beheld a distant fleet. Like the mist of ocean they came: and poured their youth upon the coast. The chief was among them,

like the stag in the midst of the herd. His shield is studded with gold; stately strode the king of spears. He moved towards Selma; his thousands moved behind.

"Go, with a song of peace," said Fingal; "go, Ullin, to the king of swords. Tell him that we are mighty in war; that the ghosts of our foes are many. But renowned are they who have feasted in my halls! They shew the arms* of my fathers in a foreign land: the sons of the strangers wonder, and bless the friends of Morven's race; for our names have been heard afar: the kings of the world shook in the midst of their host."†

Ullin went with his song. Fingal rested on his spear: he saw the mighty foe in his armour: he blest the stranger's son. "How stately art thou, son of the sea!" said the king of woody Morven. Thy sword is a beam of fire by thy side: thy spear is a pine that defies the storm. The varied face of the moon is not broader than thy shield. Ruddy is thy face of youth! soft the ringlets of thy hair! But this tree may fall, and his memory be forgot! The daughter of the stranger will be sad, looking to the rolling sea: the children will say, "We see a ship; perhaps it is the king of Balclutha." The tear starts from their mother's eye. Her thoughts are of him who sleeps in Morven!"

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* It was a custom among the ancient Scots, to exchange arms with their guests, and those arms were preserved long in the different families, as monuments of the friendship which subsisted between their ancestors.

† This is doubtless an allusion to the defeat of the Romans by Fingal, on the banks of the Carron before mentioned. *C.*

Such were the words of the king, when Ullin came to the mighty Carthon; he threw down the spear before him; he raised the song of peace. "Come to the feast of Fingal, Carthon, from the rolling sea! partake of the feast of the king, or lift the spear of war! The ghosts of our foes are many: but renowned are the friends of Morven! Behold that field, O Carthon, many a green hill rises there, with mossy stones and rustling grass: these are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the sons of the rolling sea!"

"Dost thou speak to the weak in arms!" said Carthon, "bard of the woody Morven? Is my face pale for fear, son of the peaceful song? Why, then, dost thou think to darken my soul with the tales of those who fell? My arm has fought in battle; my renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, bid them yield to Fingal. Have not I seen the fallen Balclutha? And shall I feast with Comhal's son? Comhal! who threw his fire in the midst of my father's hall! I was young, and knew not the cause why the virgins wept. The columns of smoke pleased mine eye, when they rose above my walls! I often looked back with gladness, when my friends fled along the hill. But when the years of my youth came on, I beheld the moss of my fallen walls; my sigh arose with the morning, and my tears descended with night. Shall I not fight, I said to my soul, against the children of my foes? And I will fight, O bard! I feel the strength of my soul."

His people gathered around the hero, and drew

at once, their shining swords. He stands, in the midst, like a pillar of fire; the tear half-starting from his eye; for he thought of the fallen Balclutha; the crowded pride of his soul arose. Sidelong he looked up to the hill, where our heroes shone in arms; the spear trembled in his hand: bending forward, he seemed to threaten the king.

Shall I, said Fingal to his soul, meet, at once, the youth? Shall I stop him in the midst of his course, before his fame shall arise? But the bard, hereafter, may say, when he sees the tomb of Carthon, Fingal took his thousands to battle, before the noble Carthon fell. No: bard of the times to come! thou shalt not lessen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the war. If he overcomes, I rush, in my strength, like the roaring stream of Cona. Who, of my chiefs, will meet the son of the rolling sea! many are his warriors on the coast, and strong is his ashen spear.

Cathul* rose, in his strength, the son of the mighty Lormar: three hundred youths attend the chief, the race† of his native streams. Feeble was his arm against Carthon, he fell; and his heroes fled. Connal‡ resumed the battle, but he broke his heavy spear: he lay bound on the field: Carthon pursued his people.

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* Cath'huil, *the eye of battle.*

† It appears, from this passage, that clanship was established in the days of Fingal, though not on the same footing with the present tribes in the north of Scotland.

‡ This Connal is very much celebrated, in ancient poetry, for his wisdom and valour; there is a small tribe still subsisting, in the North, who pretend they are descended from him.

Clessámmor! said the king* of Morven, where is the spear of thy strength? Wilt thou behold Connal bound? thy friend, at the stream of Lora. Rise, in the light of thy steel, companion of valiant Comhal! Let the youth of Balclutha feel the strength of Morven's race. He rose in the strength of his steel, shaking his grizly locks. He fitted the shield to his side; he rushed, in the pride of valour.

Carthon stood on a rock; he saw the hero rushing on. He loved the dreadful joy of his face; his strength, in the locks of age! "Shall I lift that spear, he said, that never strikes, but once, a foe? Or shall I, with the words of peace, preserve the warrior's life? Stately are his steps of age! lovely the remnant of his years! Perhaps it is the husband of Moina; the father of car-borne Carthon. Often have I heard, that he dwelt at the echoing stream of Lora."†

Such were his words, when Clessámmor came, and lifted high his spear. The youth received it on his shield, and spoke the words of peace. "Warrior of the aged locks! Is there no youth to lift the spear? Hast thou no son to raise the shield before his father to meet the arm of youth? Is the spouse of thy love no more? or weeps she over the tombs of thy sons? Art thou of the kings of men? What will be the fame of my sword should'st thou fall?

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* Fingal did not then know that Carthon was the son of Clessámmor.

† This opposes my conjectures that the Lora here alluded to is in Antrim County, but the name is applicable to many places in Scotland. *C.*

It will be great, thou son of pride! begun the tall Clessámmor. I have been renowned in battle; but I never told my name* to a foe. Yield to me son of the wave, then shalt thou know, that the mark of my sword is in many a field. "I never yielded, king of spears! replied the noble pride of Carthon: I have also fought in war; I behold my future fame. Despise me not, thou chief of men! my arm, my spear is strong. Retire among thy friends, let younger heroes fight." Why dost thou wound my soul? replied Clessámmor with a tear. Age does not tremble on my hand; I still can lift the sword. Shall I fly in Fingal's sight; in the sight of him I love? Son of the sea! I never fled: exalt thy pointed spear.

They fought, like two contending winds, that strive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his spear to err; he still thought that the foe was the spouse of Moina. He broke Clessámmor's beamy spear in twain: he seized his shining sword. But as Carthon was binding the chief; the chief drew the dagger of his fathers. He saw the foe's uncovered side; and opened, there, a wound.

Fingal saw Clessámmor low: he moved in the sound of his steel. The host stood silent, in his presence; they turned their eyes to the king. He

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* To tell one's name to an enemy was reckoned, in those days of heroism, a manifest evasion of fighting him: for if it was once known, that friendship subsisted, of old, between the ancestors of the combatants, the battle immediately ceased; and the ancient amity of their forefathers was renewed. *A man who tells his name to his enemy*, was of old an ignominious term for a coward.

came, like the sullen noise of a storm, before the winds arise: the hunter hears it in the vale, and retires to the cave of the rock. Carthon stood in his place: the blood is rushing down his side: he saw the coming down of the king; his hopes of fame arose;* but pale was his cheek: his hair flew loose, his helmet shook on high; the force of Carthon failed; but his soul was strong.

Fingal beheld the hero's blood; he stops the uplifted spear. "Yield, king of swords! said Comhal's son; I behold thy blood. Thou has been mighty in battle; and thy fame shall never fade." Art thou the king so far renowned? replied the car-borne Carthon. Art thou that light of death, that frightens the kings of the world? But why should Carthon ask? for he is like the stream of his hills; strong as a river, in his course: swift as the eagle of heaven. O that I had fought with the king; that my fame might be great in song! that the hunter, beholding my tomb, might say, he fought with the mighty Fingal. But Carthon dies unknown; he has poured out his force on the weak."

But thou shalt not die unknown, replied the king of woody Morven: my bards are many, O Carthon! Their songs descend to future times.† The children of years to come shall hear the fame of Carthon; when they sit round the burning oak,‡ and the night

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* This expression admits of a double meaning, either that Carthon hoped to acquire glory by killing Fingal; or to be rendered famous by falling by his hand. The last is the most probable, as Carthon is already wounded.

† How prophetic. *C.*

‡ In the north of Scotland, till very lately, they burnt a

is spent in songs of old. The hunter, sitting in the heath, shall hear the rustling blàst; and, raising his eyes, behold the rock where Carthon fell. He shall turn to his son, and shew the place where the mighty fought; "There the king of Balclutha fought, like the strength of a thousand streams."

Joy rose in Carthon's face: he lifted his heavy eyes. He gave his sword to Fingal, to lie within his hall, that the memory of Balclutha's king might remain in Morven. The battle ceased along the field, the bard had sung the song of peace. The chiefs gathered round the falling Carthon; they heard his words with sighs. Silent they leaned on their spears, while Balclutha's hero spoke. His hair sighed in the wind, and his voice was sad and low.

"King of Morven, Carthon said, I fall in the midst of my course. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the last of Reuthámir's race. Darkness dwells in Balclutha: the shadows of grief in Crathmo. But raise my remembrance on the banks of Lora: where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the husband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon." His words reached the heart of Clessámmor: he fell, in silence, on his son. The host stood darkened around: no voice is on the plain. Night came, the moon, from the east, looked on the mournful field: but still they stood, like a silent grove that lifts its

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large trunk of an oak at their festivals; it was called *the trunk of the feast.* Time had so much consecrated the custom, that the vulgar thought it a kind of sacrilege to disuse it.

head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

Three days they mourned above Carthon; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie; a dim ghost defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often seen; when the sunbeam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There she is seen, Malvina! but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the stranger's land; and she is still alone!

Fingal was sad for Carthon; he commanded his bards to mark the day, when shadowy autumn returned: And often did they mark the day, and sing the hero's praise. "Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire! Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who but Carthon, king of swords! The people fall! see! how he strides, like the sullen ghost of Morven! But there he lies a goodly oak, which sudden blasts overturned! When shalt thou rise, Balclutha's joy? When, Carthon, shalt thou arise? Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud?" Such were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: Ossian often joined their voice; and added to their song. My soul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his youth: and thou, O Clessámmor! where is thy dwelling in the wind? Has the youth forgot his wound? Flies he, on clouds, with thee? I feel the sun, O Malvina! leave me to my rest. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a

feeble voice! The beam of heaven delights to shine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around!

O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O sun! thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth, in thy awful beauty; the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone: who can be a companion of thy course! The oaks of the mountains fall: the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again: the moon herself is lost in heaven; but thou art for ever the same; rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies; thou lookest in thy beauty, from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian, thou lookest in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. But thou art perhaps, like me, for a season, thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in thy clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O sun! in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills; the blast of the north is on the plain, the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey.

OINA-MORUL:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

After an address to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, Ossian proceeds to relate his own expedition to Fuärfed, an island of Scandinavia. Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed, being hard pressed in war, by Tonthormod, chief of Sar-dronlo, (who had demanded, in vain, the daughter of Mal-orchol in marriage,) Fingal sent Ossian to his aid. Ossian, on the day after his arrival, came to battle with Ton-thormod, and took him prisoner. Mal-orchol offers his daughter, Oina-morul to Ossian; but he, discovering her passion for Ton-thormod, generously surrenders her to her lover, and brings about a reconciliation between the two kings.

OINA-MORUL

A

Poem.

AS flies the unconstant sun, over Larmon's grassy hill; so pass the tales of old, along my soul, by night! when bards are removed to their place; when harps are hung in Selma's hall; then comes a voice to Ossian, and awakes his soul! it is the voice of years that are gone! they roll before me, with all their deeds! I seize the tales, as they pass and pour them forth in song. Nor a troubled stream is the song of the king, it is like the rising of music from Lutha of the strings. Lutha of many strings, not silent are thy streamy rocks, when the white hands of Malvina move upon the harp! Light of the shadowy thoughts that fly across my soul, daughter of Toscar of helmets, wilt thou not hear the song! We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away!

It was in the days of the king, while yet my locks were young, that I marked Con-cathlin,* on high,

* Con-cathlin, *mild beam of the wave.* What star was so called of old is not easily ascertained. Some now distinguish the pole-star by that name. A song, which is still in repute

from ocean's nightly wave. My course was towards the isle of Fuärfed, woody dweller of seas! Fingal had sent me to the aid of Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed wild; for war was around him, and our fathers had met at the feast.

In Col-coiled, I bound my sails; I sent my sword to Mal-orchol of shells. He knew the signal of Albion, and his joy arose. He came from his own high hall, and seized my hand in grief. "Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king? Ton-thormod of many spears is the chief of wavy Sar-dronlo. He saw, and loved my daughter, white-bosomed Oina-morul. He sought; I denied the maid; for our fathers had been foes. He came, with battle, to Fuärfed; my people are rolled away. Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king?"

I come not, I said, to look, like a boy, on the strife. Fingal remembers Mal-orchol, and his hall for strangers. From his waves, the warrior descended, on thy woody isle. Thou wert no cloud before him. Thy feast was spread with songs. For this

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among the sea-faring part of the Highlanders, alludes to this passage of Ossian. The author commends the knowledge of Ossian in sea affairs, a merit which, perhaps, few of us moderns will allow him, or any in the age in which he lived. One thing is certain, that the Caledonians often made their way through the dangerous and tempestuous seas of Scandinavia; which is more, perhaps, than the more polished nations, subsisting in those times, dared to venture. In estimating the degree of knowledge of arts among the ancients, we ought not to bring it into comparison with the improvements of modern times. Our advantages over them proceed more from accident, than any merit of ours.

my sword shall rise; and thy foes perhaps may fail. Our friends are not forgot in their danger, though distant is our land.

"Descendant of the daring Trenmor, thy words are like the voice of Cruth-loda, when he speaks from his parting cloud, strong dweller of the sky! Many have rejoiced at my feast; but they all have forgot Mal-orchol. I have looked towards all the winds; but no white sails were seen. But steel* resounds in my hall; and not the joyful shells. Come to my dwelling, race of heroes! dark-skirted night is near. Hear the voice of songs, from the maid of Fuärfed wild."

We went. On the harp arose the white hands of Oina-morul. She waked her own sad tale, from

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* There is a severe satire couched in this expression, against the guests of Mal-orchol. Had his feast been still spread, had joy continued in his hall, his former parasites would not have failed to resort to him. But as the time of festivity was past, their attendance also ceased. The sentiments of a certain old bard are agreeable to this observation. He, poetically, compares a great man to a fire kindled in a desert place. "Those that pay court to him, says he, are rolling large around him, like the smoke about the fire. This smoke gives the fire a great appearance at a distance, but it is but an empty vapour itself, and varying its form at every breeze. When the trunk, which fed the fire, is consumed, the smoke departs on all the winds. So the flatterers forsake their chief, when his power declines." I have chosen to give a paraphrase, rather than a translation, of this passage, as the original is verbose and frothy, notwithstanding the sentimental merit of the author. He was one of the less ancient bards, and their compositions are not nervous enough to bear a literal translation.

every trembling string. I stood in silence; for bright in her locks was the daughter of many isles! Her eyes were two stars, looking forward through a rushing shower. The mariner marks them on high, and blesses the lovely beams. With morning we rushed to battle, to Tormul's resounding stream: the foe moved to the sound of Ton-thormod's bossy shield. From wing to wing the strife was mixed. I met Ton-thormod in fight. Wide flew his broken steel. I seized the king in war. I gave his hand, bound fast with thongs, to Mal-orchol, the giver of shells. Joy rose at the feast of Fuãrfed, for the foe had failed. Ton-thormod turned his face away, from Oina-morul of isles!

Son of Fingal, begun Mal-orchol, not forgot shalt thou pass from me. A light shall dwell in thy ship, Oina-morul of slow-rolling eyes. She shall kindle gladness, along thy mighty soul. Nor unheeded shall the maid move in Selma, through the dwelling of kings!

In the hall I lay in night. Mine eyes were half-closed in sleep. Soft music came to mine ear: it was like the rising breeze, that whirls, at first, the thistle's beard; then flies, dark-shadowy, over the grass. It was the maid of Fuärfed wild! she raised the nightly song; she knew that my soul was a stream, that flowed at pleasant sounds. "Who looks," she said, "from his rock, on ocean's closing mist? his long locks, like the raven's wing, are wandering on the blast. Stately are his steps in grief! The tears are in his eyes! His manly breast is heaving over his bursting soul! Retire, I am

distan. lar; a wanderer in lands unknown. Though the race of kings are around me, yet my soul is dark. Why have our fathers been foes, Ton-thormod love of maids!"

"Soft voice of the streamy isle," I said, "why dost thou mourn by night? The race of daring Trenmor are not the dark in soul. Thou shalt not wander, by streams unknown, blue-eyed Oina-morul! Within this bosom is a voice; it comes not to other ears: it bids Ossian hear the hapless, in their hour of woe. Retire, soft singer by night! Ton-thormod shall not mourn on his rock!"

With morning I loosed the king. I gave the long-haired maid. Mal-orchol heard my words, in the midst of his echoing halls. "King of Fuärfed wild, why should Ton-thormod mourn? He is of the race of heroes, and a flame in war. Your fathers have been foes, but now their dim ghosts rejoice in death. They stretch their hands of mist to the same shell in Loda. Forget their rage, ye warriors! it was the cloud of other years."

Such were the deeds of Ossian, while yet his locks were young: though loveliness, with a robe of beams, clothed the daughter of many isles. We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away!

COLNA-DONA

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal dispatches Ossian and Toscar, the son of Conloch, and father of Malvina, to raise a stone, on the banks of the stream of Crona, to perpetuate the memory of a victory, which he had obtained in that place. When they were employed in that work, Car-ul, a neighbouring chief, invited them to a feast. They went, and Toscar fell desperately in love with Colna-dona, the daughter of Car-ul. Colna-dona became no less enamoured of Toscar. An incident, at a hunting party, brings their loves to a happy issue.

COLNA-DONA

A

Poem.

COL-AMON* of troubled streams, dark wanderer of distant vales, I behold thy course between trees, near Car-ul's echoing halls! There dwelt bright Colna-dona, the daughter of the king. Her eyes were rolling stars; her arms were white as the foam of streams. Her breast rose slowly to sight, like ocean's heaving wave. Her soul was a stream of light. Who, among the maids, was like the love of heroes.

Beneath the voice of the king, we moved to

* Colna-dona signifies *the love of heroes.* Col-aman, *narrow river.* Car-ul, *dark eyed.* Col-amon, the residence of Car-ul, was in the neighbourhood of Agricola's wall, towards the south. Car-ul seems to have been of the race of those Britons who are distinguished by the name of Maiatæ, by the writers of Rome. Maiatæ is derived from two Galic words, MOI, *a plain*, and AITICH, *inhabitants*; so that the signification of Maiatæ is *the inhabitants of the plain country*; a name given to the Britons, who were settled in the Lowlands, in contradistinction to the Caledonians (i. e. CAEL-DON, *the Gauls of the hills*,) who were possessed of the more mountainous division of North Britain.

Crona* of the streams, Toscar of grassy Lutha, and Ossian, young in fields. Three bards attended with songs. Three bossy shields were borne before us: for we were to rear the stone, in memory of the past. By Crona's mossy course, Fingal had scattered his foes: he had rolled away the strangers like a troubled sea. We came to the place of renown: from the mountains descended night. I tore an oak from its hill, and raised a flame on high. I bade my fathers to look down, from the clouds of their hall; for, at the fame of their race, they brighten in the wind.

I took a stone from the stream, amidst the song of bards. The blood of Fingal's foes hung curdled in its ooze. Beneath I placed, at intervals, three bosses from the shields of foes, as rose or fell the sound of Ullin's nightly song. Toscar laid a dagger in earth, a mail of sounding steel. We raised the mould around the stone, and bade it speak to other years.

Oozy daughter of streams, that now art reared on high, speak to the feeble, O stone! after Selma's

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* Crona, *murmuring*, was the name of a small stream, which discharged itself in the river Carron. It is often mentioned by Ossian, and the scenes of many of his poems are on its banks. The enemies, whom Fingal defeated here, are not mentioned. They were, probably, the provincial Britons. That tract of country between the Friths of Forth and Clyde has been, through all antiquity, famous for battles and rencounters between the different nations, who were possessed of North and South Britain. Stirling, a town situated there, derives its name from that very circumstance. It is a corruption of the Galic name, STRILA, i. e. *the hill, or rock, of contention.*

race have failed! Prone, from the stormy night, the traveller shall lay him, by thy side: thy whistling moss shall sound in his dreams; the years that were past shall return. Battles rise before him, blue-shielded kings descend to war: the darkened moon looks from heaven, on the troubled field. He shall burst, with morning, from dreams, and see the tombs of warriors round. He shall ask about the stone, and the aged shall reply, "This grey stone was raised by Ossian, a chief of other years!"

From* Col-amon came a bard, from Car-ul, the friend of strangers. He bade us to the feast of kings, to the dwelling of bright Colna-dona. We went to the hall of harps. There Car-ul brightened between his aged locks, when he beheld the sons of his friends, like two young branches before him.

"Sons of the mighty," he said, "ye bring back

* The manners of the Britons and Caledonians were so similar in the days of Ossian, that there can be no doubt, that they were originally the same people, and descended from those Gauls who first possessed themselves of South Britain, and gradually migrated to the North. This hypothesis is more rational than the idle fables of ill-formed senachies, who bring the Caledonians from distant countries. The bare opinion of Tacitus (which, by the bye, was only founded on a similarity of the personal figure of the Caledonians to the Germans of his own time,) though it has staggered some learned men, is not sufficient to make us believe, that the ancient inhabitants of North Britain were a German colony. A discussion of a point like this might be curious, but could never be satisfactory. Periods so distant are so involved in obscurity, that nothing certain can be now advanced concerning them. The light which the Roman writers hold forth is too feeble to guide us to the truth, through the darkness which has surrounded it.

the days of old, when first I descended from waves, on Selma's streamy vale! I pursued Duthmocarglos, dweller of ocean's wind. Our fathers had been foes, we met by Clutha's winding waters. He fled, along the sea, and my sails were spread behind him. Night deceived me, on the deep. I came to the dwelling of kings, to Selma of high-bosomed maids. Fingal came forth with his bards, and Conloch, arm of death. I feasted three days in the hall, and saw the blue eyes of Erin, Roscrana, daughter of heroes, light of Cormac's race. Nor forgot did my steps depart: the kings gave their shields to Car-ul: they hang, on high, in Col-amon, in memory of the past. Sons of the daring kings, ye bring back the days of old!"

Car-ul kindled the oak of feasts. He took two bosses from our shields. He laid them in earth, beneath a stone, to speak to the hero's race. "When battle," said the king, "shall roar, and our sons are to meet in wrath. My race shall look, perhaps, on this stone, when they prepare the spear. Have not our fathers met in peace, they will say, and lay aside the shield?"

Night came down. In her long locks moved the daughter of Car-ul. Mixed with the harp arose the voice of white-armed Colna-dona. Toscar darkened in his place, before the love of heroes. She came on his troubled soul, like a beam to the dark-heaving ocean; when it bursts from a cloud, and brightens the foamy side of a wave.*

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* Here an episode is entirely lost; or, at least, is handed down so imperfectly, that it does not deserve a place in the poem.

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With morning we awaked the woods; and hung forward on the path of the roes. They fell by their wonted streams. We returned through Crona's vale. From the wood a youth came forward, with a shield and pointless spear. "Whence," said Toscar of Lutha, "is the flying beam? Dwells there peace at Col-amon, round bright Colna-dona, of harps?"

"By Col-amon of streams," said the youth, "bright Colna-dona dwelt. She dwelt; but her course is now in deserts, with the son of the king; he that seized with love her soul as it wandered through the hall." "Stranger of tales," said Toscar, "hast thou marked the warrior's course? He must fall, give thou that bossy shield." In wrath he took the shield. Fair behind it rose the breasts of a maid, white as the bosom of a swan, rising graceful on swift-rolling waves. It was Colna-dona of harps, the daughter of the king! Her blue eyes had rolled on Toscar, and her love arose!

OITHONA:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Gaul, the son of Morni, attended Lathmon into his own country, after his being defeated in Morven, as related in the preceding poem. He was kindly entertained by Nuäth, the father of Lathmon, and fell in love with his daughter Oithona. The lady was no less enamoured of Gaul, and a day was fixed for their marriage. In the mean time Fingal, preparing for an expedition into the country of the Britons, sent for Gaul. He obeyed, and went; but not without promising to Oithona to return, if he survived the war, by a certain day. Lathmon too was obliged to attend his father Nuäth in his wars, and Oithona was left alone at Dunlathmon, the seat of the family. Dunrommath, lord of Uthal, supposed to be one of the Orkneys, taking advantage of the absence of her friends, came, and carried off, by force, Oithona, who had formerly rejected his love, into Tromáthon, a desert island, where he concealed her in a cave.

Gaul returned on the day appointed; heard of the rape, and sailed to Tromáthon, to revenge himself on Dunrommath. When he landed, he found Oithona disconsolate, and resolved not to survive the loss of her honour. She told him the story of her misfortunes, and she scarce ended, when Dunrommath, with his followers appeared at the further end of the island. Gaul prepared to attack him, recommending to Oithona to retire, till the battle was over. She seemingly obeyed; but she secretly armed herself, rushed into the thickest of the battle, and was mortally wounded. Gaul pursuing the flying enemy, found her just expiring on the field: he mourned over her, raised her tomb, and returned to Morven. Thus is the story handed down by tradition; nor is it given with any material difference in the poem, which opens with Gaul's return to Dunlathmon, after the rape of Oithona.

OITHONA:

A

Poem.

DARKNESS dwells around Dunlathmon, though the moon shews half her face on the hill. The daughter of night turns her eyes away; she beholds the approaching grief. The son of Morni is on the plain: there is no sound in the hall. No long-streaming beam of light comes trembling through the gloom. The voice of Oithona* is not heard amidst the noise of the streams of Duvranna "Whither art thou gone in thy beauty, dark-haired daughter of Nuath? Lathmon is in the field of the valiant, but thou didst promise to remain in the hall till the son of Morni returned. Till he returned from Strumon, to the maid of his love! The tear was on thy cheek at his departure; the sigh rose in secret in thy breast. But thou dost not come forth with songs, with the lightly-trembling sound of the harp!"

Such were the words of Gaul, when he came to Dunlathmon's towers. The gates were open and dark. The winds were blustering in the hall. The

* Oi-thóna, *the virgin of the wave.*

trees strowed the threshold with leaves; the murmur of night was abroad. Sad and silent, at a rock, the son of Morni sat: his soul trembled for the maid; but he knew not whither to turn his course! The son* of Leth stood at a distance, and heard the winds in his bushy hair. But he did not raise his voice, for he saw the sorrow of Gaul!

Sleep descended on the chiefs. The visions of night arose. Oithona stood, in a dream, before the eyes of Morni's son. Her hair was loose and disordered: her lovely eye rolled deep in tears. Blood stained her snowy arm. The robe half hid the wound of her breast. She stood over the chief, and her voice was feebly heard. "Sleeps the son of Morni, he that was lovely in the eyes of Oithona? Sleeps Gaul at the distant rock, and the daughter of Nuath low? The sea rolls round the dark isle of Tromáthon. I sit in my tears in the cave! Nor do I sit alone, O Gaul! the dark chief of Cuthal is there. He is there in the rage of his love. What can Oithona do?"

A rougher blast rushed through the oak. The dream of night departed. Gaul took his aspen spear. He stood in the rage of his soul. Often did his eyes turn to the east. He accused the lagging light. At length the morning came forth. The hero lifted up the sail. The winds came rustling from the hill; he bounded on the waves of the deep. On the

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* Morlo, the son of Leth, is one of Fingal's most famous heroes. He and three other men attended Gaul on his expedition to Tromáthon.

third day arose Tromáthon,* like a blue shield in the midst of the sea. The white wave roared against its rocks; sad Oithona sat on the coast! She looked on the rolling waters, and her tears came down. But when she saw Gaul in his arms, she started, and turned her eyes away. Her lovely cheek is bent and red: her white arm trembles by her side. Thrice she strove to fly from his presence; thrice her steps failed her as she went!

"Daughter of Nuath," said the hero, "why dost thou fly from Gaul? Do my eyes send forth the flame of death? Darkens hatred in my soul? Thou art to me the beam of the east, rising in a land unknown. But thou coverest thy face with sadness, daughter of car-borne Nuath! Is the foe of Oithona near? My soul burns to meet him in fight. The sword trembles by the side of Gaul, and longs to glitter in his hand. Speak, daughter of Nuath! Dost thou not behold my tears?"

"Young chief of Strumon," replied the maid, "why comest thou over the dark-blue wave, to Nuath's mournful daughter? Why did I not pass away in secret, like the flower of the rock, that lifts its fair head unseen, and strows its withered leaves on the blast? Why didst thou come, O Gaul! to hear my departing sigh? I vanish in my youth; my name shall not be heard. Or it will be heard with grief; the tears of Nuath must fall. Thou wilt be sad, son of Morni! for the departed fame of Oithona. But she shall sleep in the narrow tomb, far from

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* Tróm-thón, *heavy or deep-sounding wave.*

the voice of the mourner. Why didst thou come, chief of Strumon! to the sea-beat rocks of Tromáthon?"

"I came to meet thy foes, daughter of car-borne Nuath! The death of Cuthal's chief darkens before me; or Morni's son shall fall! Oithona! when Gaul is low, raise my tomb on that oozy rock. When the dark-bounding ship shall pass, call the sons of the sea! call them, and give this sword, to bear it hence to Morni's hall. The grey-haired chief will then cease to look towards the desert for the return of his son!"

"Shall the daughter of Nuath live?" she replied with a bursting sigh. "Shall I live in Tromáthon, and the son of Morni low? My heart is not of that rock; nor my soul careless as that sea, which lifts its blue waves to every wind, and rolls beneath the storm! The blast which shall lay thee low, shall spread the branches of Oithona on earth. We shall wither together, son of car-borne Morni! The narrow house is pleasant to me, and the grey stone of the dead: for never more will I leave thy rocks, O sea-surrounded Tromáthon! Night* came on with her clouds, after the departure of Lathmon, when he went to the wars of his fathers, to the moss-covered rock of Duthormoth. Night came on. I sat in the hall, at the beam of the oak! The wind was abroad in the trees. I heard the sound of arms. Joy rose in my face. I thought of thy return. It was the chief of Cuthal, the red-

* Oithona relates how she was carried away by Dunrommath.

haired strength of Dunrommath. His eyes rolled in fire: the blood of my people was on his sword. They who defended Oithona fell by the gloomy chief! What could I do? My arm was weak. I could not lift the spear. He took me in my grief, amidst my tears he raised the sail. He feared the returning Lathmon, the brother of unhappy Oithona! But behold he comes with his people! the dark wave is divided before him! Whither wilt thou turn thy steps, son of Morni? Many are the warriors of thy foe!"

"My steps never turned from battle," Gaul said, and unsheathed his sword. "Shall I then begin to fear, Oithona! when thy foes are near? Go to thy cave, my love, till our battle cease on the field. Son of Leth, bring the bows of our fathers! the sounding quiver of Morni! Let our three warriors bend the yew. Ourselves will lift the spear. They are an host on the rock! our souls are strong in war!"

Oithona went to the cave. A troubled joy rose on her mind, like the red path of lightning on a stormy cloud! Her soul was resolved; the tear was dried from her wildly-looking eye. Dunrommath slowly approached. He saw the son of Morni. Contempt contracted his face, a smile is on his dark-brown cheek; his red eye rolled, half-concealed beneath his shaggy brows!

"Whence are the sons of the sea?" begun the gloomy chief. "Have the winds driven you on the rocks of Tromáthon? Or come you in search of the white-handed maid? The sons of the unhappy, ye feeble men, come to the hand of Dunrommath!

His eyes spare not the weak; he delights in the blood of strangers. Oithona is a beam of light, and the chief of Cuthal enjoys it in secret: wouldst thou come on its loveliness, like a cloud, son of the feeble hand? Thou mayest come, but shalt thou return to the halls of thy fathers?" "Dost thou not know me," said Gaul, "red-haired chief of Cuthal? Thy feet were swift on the heath, in the battle of car-borne Lathmon; when the sword of Morni's son pursued his host, in Morven's woody land. Dunrommath! thy words are mighty, for thy warriors gather behind thee. But do I fear them, son of pride? I am not of the race of the feeble!"

Gaul advanced in his arms; Dunrommath shrunk behind his people. But the spear of Gaul pierced the gloomy chief; his sword lopped off his head, as it bended in death. The son of Morni shook it thrice by the lock; the warriors of Dunrommath fled. The arrows of Morven pursued them: ten fell on the mossy rocks. The rest lift the sounding sail, and bound on the troubled deep. Gaul advanced towards the cave of Oithona. He beheld a youth leaning on a rock. An arrow had pierced his side; his eye rolled faintly beneath his helmet. The soul of Morni's son was sad, he came and spoke the words of peace.

"Can the hand of Gaul heal thee, youth of the mournful brow? I have searched for the herbs of the mountains; I have gathered them on the secret banks of their streams. My hand has closed the wound of the brave, their eyes have blessed the son of Morni. Where dwelt thy fathers, warrior? Were

they of the sons of the mighty? Sadness shall come, like night, on thy native streams. Thou art fallen in thy youth!"

"My fathers," replied the stranger, "were of the race of the mighty; but they shall not be sad; for my fame is departed like morning mist. High walls rise on the banks of Duvranna; and see their mossy towers in the stream; a rock ascends behind them with its bending pines. Thou mayest behold it far distant. There my brother dwells. He is renowned in battle: give him this glittering helm."

The helmet fell from the hand of Gaul. It was the wounded Oithona! She had armed herself in the cave, and came in search of death. Her heavy eyes are half closed; the blood pours from her heaving side. "Son of Morni!" she said, "prepare the narrow tomb. Sleep grows, like darkness, on my soul. The eyes of Oithona are dim! O had I dwelt at Duvranna, in the bright beam of my fame! then had my years come on with joy; the virgins would then bless my steps. But I fall in youth, son of Morni! my father shall blush in his hall!"

She fell pale on the rock of Tromathon. The mournful warrior raised her tomb. He came to Morven; we saw the darkness of his soul. Ossian took the harp in the praise of Oithona. The brightness of the face of Gaul returned. But his sigh rose, at times, in the midst of his friends; like blasts that shake their unfrequent wings, after the stormy winds are laid!

CROMA:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Malvina, the daughter of Toscar is overheard by Ossian lamenting the death of Oscar her lover. Ossian, to divert her grief, relates his own actions in an expedition which he undertook, at Fingal's command, to aid Crothar the petty king of Croma, a country in Ireland, against Rothmar who invaded his dominions. The story is delivered down thus in tradition. Crothar king of Croma being blind with age, and his son too young for the field, Rothmar the chief of Tromlo resolved to avail himself of the opportunity offered of annexing the dominions of Crothar to his own. He accordingly marched into the country subject to Crothar, but which he held of Arth or Artho, who was, at the time, supreme king of Ireland. *M.*—That is, Artho, at the time, was the usurper of the Principality of O'Neill, who really was by right the supreme King of Ireland! but then limited to the bounds of the map—which embraces Cromac—held under the usurper of O'Neill's kingdom. *C.*

Crothar being, on account of his age and blindness, unfit for action, sent for aid to Fingal king of Scotland, who ordered his son Ossian to the relief of Crothar. But before his arrival Fovar-gormo, the son of Crothar, attacking Rothmar, was slain himself, and his forces totally defeated. Ossian renewed the war; came to battle, killed Rothmar, and routed his army. Croma being thus delivered of its enemies, Ossian returned to Scotland. *M.*

There is a district of country in Down County, commencing on the *Legon*, above Belfast, and after intersecting the villages of Newton-Breda and Castlereagh, runs into Strangford Loch. It is called *Cromac*, and may have been the Croma of Ossian! *C.*

CROMA:

A

Poem.

"IT was the voice of my love! seldom art thou in the dreams of Malvina! Open your airy halls, O fathers of Toscar of shields! Unfold the gates of your clouds: the steps of Malvina are near. I have heard a voice in my dream. I feel the fluttering of my soul. Why didst thou come, O blast! from the dark-rolling face of the lake? Thy rustling wing was in the tree; the dream of Malvina fled. But she beheld her love, when his robe of mist flew on the wind. A sun-beam was on his skirts, they glittered like the gold of the stranger. It was the voice of my love! seldom comes he to my dreams!"

"But thou dwellest in the soul of Malvina, son of mighty Ossian! My sighs arise with the beam of the east; my tears descend with the drops of night. I was a lovely tree, in thy presence, Oscar, with all my branches round me; but thy death came like a blast from the desert, and laid my green head low. The spring returned with its showers; no leaf of mine arose! The virgins saw me silent in the hall; they touched the harp of joy. The tear

was on the cheek of Malvina: the virgins beheld me in my grief. Why art thou sad? they said; thou first of the maids of Lutha! Was he lovely as the beam of the morning, and stately in thy sight?"

Pleasant is thy song in Ossian's ear, daughter of streamy Lutha! Thou hast heard the music of departed bards, in the dream of thy rest, when sleep fell on thine eyes, at the murmur of Moruth.* When thou didst return from the chase, in the day of the sun, thou hast heard the music of bards, and thy song is lovely! It is lovely, O Malvina! but it melts the soul. There is a joy in grief when peace dwells in the breast of the sad. But sorrow wastes the mournful, O daughter of Toscar! and their days are few! They fall away, like the flower on which the sun hath looked in his strength after the mildew has passed over it, when its head is heavy with the drops of night. Attend to the tale of Ossian, O maid! He remembers the days of his youth!

The king commanded; I raised my sails, and rushed into the bay of Croma; into Croma's sounding bay in lovely Inisfail.† High on the coast arose

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* Mor'-ruth, *great stream*. *M.*—There is a Moruth, which falls into Belfast Loch, and is now named Con's water, traditionally from "*Con*—O'Niell—of the hundred fights." *C.*

† *Inisfail*, one of the ancient names of Ireland; if this district be the Croma of the ancients, which I have just described, the rushing into Croma's sounding bay, doubtless, alludes to a landing on the South side of Belfast Loch—which is bounded on the south by Cromac. *C.*

the towers of Crothar king of spears; Crothar renowned in the battles of his youth; but age dwelt then around the chief. Rothmar had raised the sword against the hero; and the wrath of Fingal burned. He sent Ossian to meet Rothmar in war, for the chief of Croma was the friend of his youth. I sent the bard before me with songs. I came into the hall of Crothar. There sat the chief amidst the arms of his fathers, but his eyes had failed. His grey locks waved around a staff, on which the warrior leaned. He hummed the song of other times, when the sound of our arms reached his ears. Crothar rose, stretched his aged hand, and blessed the son of Fingal.

"Ossian!" said the hero, "the strength of Crothar's arm has failed. O could I lift the sword, as on the day that Fingal fought at Strutha! He was the first of men! but Crothar had also his fame. The king of Morven praised me; he placed on my arm the bossy shield of Calthar, whom the king had slain in his wars. Dost thou not behold it on the wall? for Crothar's eyes have failed. Is thy strength, like thy fathers, Ossian? let the aged feel thine arm!"

I gave my arm to the king; he felt it with his aged hands. The sigh rose in his breast, and his tears came down. "Thou art strong, my son, he said, but not like the king of Morven! But who is like the hero among the mighty in war! let the feast of my hall be spread; and let my bards exalt the song. Great is he that is within my walls, ye sons of echoing Croma!" The feast is spread.

The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering a sigh, that darkly dwelt in every breast. It was like the faint beam of the moon spread on a cloud in heaven. At length the music ceased, and the aged king of Croma spoke; he spoke without a tear, but sorrow swelled in the midst of his voice.

"Son of Fingal! behold'st thou not the darkness of Crothar's joy? My soul was not sad at the feast, when my people lived before me. I rejoiced in the presence of strangers, when my son shone in the hall. But, Ossian, he is a beam that is departed. He left no streak of light behind. He is fallen. son of Fingal! in the wars of his father. Rothmar the chief of grassy Tromlo heard that these eyes had failed; he heard that my arms were fixed in the hall, and the pride of his soul arose! He came towards Croma; my people fell before him. I took my arms in my wrath, but what could sightless Crothar do? My steps were unequal; my grief was great. I wished for the days that were past. Days! wherein I fought; and won in the field of blood. My son returned from the chase; the fair-haired Fovar-gormo.* He had not lifted his sword in battle, for his arm was young. But the soul of the youth was great; the fire of valour burnt in his eyes. He saw the disordered steps of his father, and his sigh arose. "King of Croma," he said, "is it because thou hast no son; is it for the weakness of Fovar-gorma's arm that thy sighs arise? I

* Faobhar-gorm, *the blue point of steel.*

begin, my father, to feel my strength; I have drawn the sword of my youth; and I have bent the bow. Let me meet this Rothmar, with the sons of Croma: let me meet him, O my father! I feel my burning soul!" "And thou shalt meet him," I said, "son of the sightless Crothar! But let others advance before thee, that I may hear the tread of thy feet at thy return; for my eyes behold thee not, fair-haired Fovar-gormo!" He went, he met the foe; he fell. Rothmar advances to Croma. He who slew my son is near, with all his pointed spears.

This is no time to fill the shell, I replied, and took my spear! My people saw the fire of my eyes; they all arose around. Through night we strode along the heath. Grey morning rose in the east. A green narrow vale appeared before us; nor wanting was its winding stream. The dark host of Rothmar are on its banks, with all their glittering arms. We fought along the vale. They fled, Rothmar sunk beneath my sword! Day had not descended in the west, when I brought his arms to Crothar. The aged hero felt them with his hands; and joy brightened over all his thoughts.

The people gather to the hall. The shells of the feast are heard. Ten harps are strung; five bards advance, and sing, by turns,* the praise of Ossian;

* Those extempore compositions were in great repute among succeeding bards The pieces extant of that kind shew more of the good ear, than of the poetical genius of their authors. The translator has only met with one poem of this sort, which he thinks worthy of being preserved. It is a thousand years later than Ossian, but the auther seems to have

they poured forth their burning souls, and the string answered to their voice. The joy of Croma was great: for peace returned to the land. The night came on with silence; the morning returned

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observed his manner, and adopted some of his expressions. The story of it is this:—Five bards passing the night in the house of a chief, who was a poet himself, went severally to make their observations on, and returned with an extempore description of, night. The night happened to be one in October, as appears from the poem: and in the north of Scotland, it has all that variety which the bards ascribe to it, in their descriptions.

FIRST BARD.

NIGHT is dull and dark. The clouds rest on the hills. No star with green trembling beam; no moon looks from the sky. I hear the blast in the wood, but I hear it distant far. The stream of the valley murmurs; but its murmur is sullen and sad. From the tree at the grave of the dead the long-howling owl is heard. I see a dim form on the plain! It is a ghost! it fades, it flies. Some funeral shall pass this way: the meteor marks the path.

The distant dog is howling from the hut of the hill. The stag lies on the mountain moss: the hind is at his side. She hears the wind in his branchy horns. She starts, but lies again.

The roe is in the cleft of the rock; the heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. No beast, no bird is abroad, but the owl, and the howling fox. She on a leafless tree; he in a cloud on the hill.

Dark, panting, trembling, sad, the traveller has lost his way. Through shrubs, through thorns, he goes, along the gurgling rill. He fears the rock and the fen. He fears the ghost of night. The old tree groans to the blast; the falling branch resounds. The wind drives the withered burs, clung together,

vith joy. No foe came in darkness, with his glittering spear. The joy of Croma was great; for the gloomy Rothmar had fallen!

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along the grass. It is the light tread of a ghost! He trembles amidst the night.

Dark, dusky, howling, is night, cloudy, windy, and full of ghosts! The dead are abroad! my friends, receive me from the night.

Second Bard.

The wind is up, the shower descends. The spirit of the mountain shrieks. Woods fall from high. Windows flap. The growing river roars. The traveller attempts the ford. Hark! that shriek! he dies! The storm drives the horse from the hill, the goat, the lowing cow. They tremble as drives the shower, beside the mouldering bank.

The hunter starts from sleep, in his lonely hut; he wakes the fire decayed. His wet dogs smoke around him. He fills the chinks with heath. Loud roar two mountain streams which meet beside his booth.

Sad on the side of a hill the wandering shepherd sits. The tree resounds above him. The stream roars down the rock. He waits for the rising moon to guide him to his home.

Ghosts ride on the storm to-night. Sweet is their voice between the squalls of wind. Their songs are of other worlds.

The rain is past. The dry wind blows. Streams roar, and windows flap. Cold drops fall from the roof. I see the starry sky. But the shower gathers again. The west is gloomy and dark. Night is stormy and dismal; receive me, my friends, from night.

Third Bard.

The wind still sounds between the hills; and whistles through the grass of the rock. The firs fall from their place,

I raised my voice for Fovar-gormo, when they laid the chief in earth. The aged Crothar was there, but his sigh was not heard. He searched for

The turfy hut is torn. The clouds, divided, fly over the sky, and shew the burning stars. The meteor, token of death! flies sparkling through the gloom. It rests on the hill. I see the withered fern, the dark-browed rock, the fallen oak. Who is that in his shrowd beneath the tree, by the stream?

The waves dark-tumble on the lake, and lash its rocky sides. The boat is brimful in the cove; the oars on the rocking tide. A maid sits sad beside the rock, and eyes the rolling stream. Her lover promised to come. She saw his boat, when yet it was light, on the lake. Is this his broken boat on the shore? Are these his groans on the wind?

Hark! the hail rattles around. The flaky snow descends. The tops of the hills are white. The stormy winds abate. Various is the night and cold; receive me, my friends, from night.

FOURTH BARD.

Night is calm and fair; blue, starry, settled is night. The winds, with the clouds, are gone. They sink behind the hill. The moon is up on the mountain. Trees glister; streams shine on the rock. Bright rolls the settled lake; bright the stream of the vale

I see the trees overturned; the shocks of corn on the plain. The wakeful hind rebuilds the shocks, and whistles on the distant field.

Calm, settled, fair is night! Who comes from the place of the dead? That form with the robe of snow; white arms, and dark-brown hair! It is the daughter of the chief of the people: she that lately fell! Come, let us view thee, O maid! thou that hast been the delight of heroes! The blast drives the phantom away; white, without form, it ascends the hill.

The breezes drive the blue mist, slowly, over the narrow

the wound of his son, and found it in his breast. Joy rose in the face of the aged. He came and spoke to Ossian. "King of spears!" he said, "my

vale. It rises on the hill, and joins its head to heaven. Night is settled. calm, blue, starry, bright with the moon. Receive me not, my friends, for lovely is the night.

Fifth Bard.

Night is calm, but dreary. The moon is in a cloud in the west. Slow moves that pale beam along the shaded hill. The distant wave is heard. The torrent murmurs on the rock. The cock is heard from the booth. More than half the night is past. The house-wife, groping in the gloom, rekindles the settled fire. The hunter thinks that day approaches, and calls his bounding dogs. He ascends the hill, and whistles on his way. A blast removes the cloud. He sees the starry plough of the north. Much of the night is to pass. He nods by the mossy rock.

Hark! the whirlwind is in the wood! A low murmur in the vale! It is the mighty army of the dead returning from the air.

The moon rests behind the hill. The beam is still on that lofty rock. Long are the shadows of the trees. Now it is dark over all. Night is dreary, silent, and dark; receive me, my friends, from night.

The Chief.

Let clouds rest on the hills: spirits fly, and travellers fear. Let the winds of the woods arise, the sounding storms descend. Roar streams and windows flap, and green-winged meteors fly! rise the pale moon from behind her hills, or inclose her head in clouds! night is alike to me, blue, stormy, or gloomy the sky.. Night flies before the beam, when it is poured on the hill. The young day returns from his clouds, but we return no more.

son has not fallen without his fame. The young warrior did not fly; but met death, as he went forward in his strength.* Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is heard! The feeble will not behold them in the hall; or smile at their trembling hands. Their memory shall be honoured in song; the young tear of the virgin will fall. But the aged wither away, by degrees; the fame of their youth, while yet they live, is all forgot. They fall in secret. The sigh of their son is not heard. Joy is around their tomb; the stone of their fame is placed without a tear. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is around them!"

Where are our chiefs of old? Where our kings of mighty name? The fields of their battles are silent. Scarce their mossy tombs remain. We shall also be forgot. This lofty house shall fall. Our sons shall not behold the ruins in grass. They shall ask of the aged, "Where stood the walls of our fathers?"

Raise the song, and strike the harp; send round the shells of joy. Suspend a hundred tapers on high. Youths and maids begin the dance. Let some grey bard be near me to tell the deeds of other times; of kings renowned in our land, of chiefs we behold no more. Thus let the night pass until morning shall appear in our halls. Then let the bow be at hand, the dogs, the youths of the chase. We shall ascend the hill with day; and awake the deer.

* Can any thing tend more to animate and exalt the mind, than this sublime conduct of the aged and sightless warrior, Crothan? should not this heroic conduct itself be a passport for these poems into all the military and naval schools of Britain? *C.*

CALTHON AND COLMAL:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

This piece, as many more of Ossian's compositions, is addressed to one of the first Christian missionaries. The story of the poem is handed down, by tradition, thus: In the country of the Britons between the walls, two chiefs lived in the days of Fingal, Dunthalmo, lord of Teutha, supposed to be the Tweed; and Rathmor, who dwelt at Clutha, well known to be the river Clyde. Rathmor was not more renowned for his generosity and hospitality, than Dunthalmo was infamous for his cruelty and ambition. Dunthalmo, through envy, or on account of some private feuds, which subsisted between the families, murdered Cathmore at a feast; but being afterwards touched with remorse, he educated the two sons of Rathmor, Calthon and Colmar, in his own house. They growing up to man's estate, dropped some hints that they intended to revenge the death of their father, upon which Dunthalmo shut them up in two caves on the banks of Teutha, intending to take them off privately. Colmal, the daughter of Dunthalmo, who was secretly in love with Calthon, helped him to make his escape from prison, and fled with him to Fingal, disguised in the habit of a young warrior, and implored his aid against Dunthalmo. Fingal sent Ossian with three hundred men to Colmar's relief. Dunthalmo having previously murdered Colmar, came to a battle with Ossian; but he was killed by that hero, and his army totally defeated.

Calthon married Colmal, his deliverer; and Ossian returned to Morven.

CALTHON AND COLMAL.

A

Poem.

PLEASANT is the voice of thy song, thou lonely dweller of the rock! It comes on the sound of the stream, along the narrow vale. My soul awakes, O stranger! in the midst of my hall. I stretch my hand to the spear, as in the days of other years. I stretch my hand, but it is feeble; and the sigh of my bosom grows. Wilt thou not listen, son of the rock! to the song of Ossian? My soul is full of other times; the joy of my youth returns. Thus the sun appears in the west, after the steps of his brightness have moved behind a storm: the green hills lift their dewy heads: the blue stream rejoices in the vale. The aged hero comes forth on his staff; his grey hair glitters in the beam. Dost thou not behold, son of the rock! a shield in Ossian's hall?* It is marked with the strokes of battle; and the brightness of its bosses has failed. That shield the

* Though *halls* were scarce in those days, yet Macpherson, instead of blame, is rather to be applauded for such high-sounding appellations. *C.*

O

great Dunthalmo bore, the chief of streamy Teutha. Dunthalmo bore it in battle, before he fell by Ossian's spear. Listen, son of the rock! to the tale of other years!

Rathmor was a chief of Clutha. The feeble dwelt in his hall. The gates of Rathmor were never shut; his feast was always spread. The sons of the stranger came. They blessed the generous chief of Clutha. Bards raised the song, and touched the harp: joy brightened on the face of the sad! Dunthalmo came, in his pride, and rushed into the combat of Rathmor. The chief of Clutha overcame: the rage of Dunthalmo rose. He came by night, with his warriors; the mighty Rathmor fell. He fell in his halls, where his feast was often spread for strangers.

Colmal and Calthon were young, the sons of car-borne Rathmor. They came in the joy of youth, into their father's hall. They behold him in his blood; their bursting tears descend. The soul of Dunthalmo melted, when he saw the children of youth. He brought them to Alteutha's* walls; they grew in the house of their foe. They bent the bow in his presence; and came forth to his wars. They saw the fallen walls of their fathers; they saw the green thorn in the hall. Their tears rushed forth in secret. At times their faces were sad. Dun-

* Al-teutha, or rather Balteutha, *the town of Tweed*, the name of Dunthalmo's seat. It is observable that all the names in this poem are derived from the Galic language; which is a proof that it was once the universal language of the whole island

thalmo beheld their grief: his darkening soul designed their death. He closed them in two caves, on the echoing banks of Teutha. The sun did not come there with his beams; nor the moon of heaven by night. The sons of Rathmor remained in darkness, and foresaw their death.

The daughter of Dunthalmo wept in silence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal.* Her eye had rolled in secret on Calthon; his loveliness swelled in her soul. She trembled for her warrior; but what could Colmal do? Her arm could not lift the spear; nor was the sword formed for her side. Her white breast never rose beneath a mail. Neither was her eye the terror of heroes. What canst thou do, O Colmal! for the falling chief? Her steps are unequal; her hair is loose: her eyes looks wildly through her tears. She came, by night, to the hall.† She armed her lovely form in steel; the steel of a young warrior, who fell in the first of his battles. She came to the cave of Calthon, and loosed the throng from his hands.

"Arise, son of Rathmor," she said, "arise, the night is dark! Let us fly to the king of Selma,‡

* Caol-mhal, *a woman with small eye-brows*; small eye-brows were a distinguishing part of beauty in Ossian's time: and he seldom fails to give them to the fine women of his poems.

† That is, the hall where the arms taken from enemies were hung up as trophies. Ossian is very careful to make his stories probable; for he makes Colmal put on the arms of a youth killed in his first battle, as more proper for a young woman, who cannot be supposed strong enough to carry the armour of a full-grown warrior

‡ Fingal.

chief of fallen Clutha! I am the son of Lamgal, who dwelt in thy father's hall. I heard of thy dark dwelling in the cave, and my soul arose. Arise, son of Rathmor, arise, the night is dark!" "Blest voice!" replied the chief, "comest thou from the clouds to Calthon? The ghost of his fathers have often descended in his dreams, since the sun has retired from his eyes, and darkness has dwelt around him. Or art thou the son of Lamgal, the chief I often saw in Clutha? But shall I fly to Fingal, and Colmar my brother low? Will I fly to Morven, and the hero closed in night? No; give me that spear, son of Lamgal, Calthon will defend his brother!"

"A thousand warriors," replied the maid, stretch their spears round car-borne Colmar. What Can Calthon do against a host so great? Let us fly to the king of Morven, he will come with war. His arm is stretched forth to the unhappy; the lightning of his sword is round the weak. Arise, thou son of Rathmor! the shadows will fly away. Arise, or thy steps may be seen, and thou must fall in youth!"

The sighing hero rose; his tears descend for car-borne Colmar. He came with the maid to Selma's hall; but he knew not that it was Colmal. The helmet covered her lovely face. Her bosom heaved beneath the steel. Fingal returned from the chase, and found the lovely strangers. They were like two beams of light, in the midst of the hall of shells. The king heard the tale of grief; and turned his eyes around. A thousand heroes half-rose before him; claiming the war of Teutha. I came with my spear from the hill; the joy of battle rose in

my breast; for the king spoke to Ossian in the midst of a thousand chiefs.

"Son of my strength," began the king, "take thou the spear of Fingal. Go to Teutha's rushing stream, and save the car-borne Colmar. Let thy fame return before thee like a pleasant gale; that my soul may rejoice over my son, who renews the renown of our fathers. Ossian be thou a storm in war; but mild when the foe is low! It was thus my fame arose, O my son! be thou like Selma's chief. When the haughty come to my halls, my eyes behold them not. But my arm is stretched forth to the unhappy. My sword defends the weak."

I rejoiced in the words of the king. I took my rattling arms. Diaran* rose at my side, and Dargo†

* Diaran, father of that Connal who was unfortunately killed by Crimora, his mistress.

† Dargo, the son of Collath, is celebrated in other poems by Ossian. He is said to have been killed by a boar at a hunting party. The lamentation of his mistress, or wife, Mingala, over his body is extant; but whether it is of Ossian's composition, I cannot determine. It is generally ascribed to him, and has much of his manner; but some traditions mention it as an imitation by some later bard. As it has some poetical merit, I have subjoined it.

The spouse of Dargo comes in tears: for Dargo was no more! The heroes sigh over Lartho's chief; and what shall sad Mingala do? The dark soul vanished like morning mist, before the king of spears; but the generous glowed in his presence like the morning star.

Who was the fairest and most lovely? Who but Collath's

king of spears. Three hundred youths followed our steps; the lovely strangers were at my side. Dunthalmo heard the sound of our approach. He gathered the strength of Teutha. He stood on a hill with his host. They were like rocks broken with thunder, when their bent trees are singed and bare, and the streams of their chinks have failed. The stream of Teutha rolled, in its pride, before the gloomy foe. I sent a bard to Dunthalmo, to offer the combat on the plain; but he smiled in the darkness of his pride. His unsettled host moved on the hill; like the mountain-cloud, when the blast has entered its womb, and scatters the curling gloom on every side.

They brought Colmar to Teutha's bank, bound with a thousand thongs. The chief is sad, but

lovely son? Who sat in the midst of the wise, but Dargo of the mighty deeds?

Thy hand touched the trembling harp! thy voice was soft as summer winds. Ah me! what shall the heroes say? for Dargo fell before a boar. Pale is the lovely cheek; the look of which was firm in danger! Why hast thou failed on our hills? thou fairer than the beams of the sun.

The daughter of Adonfin was lovely in the eyes of the valiant; she was lovely in their eyes, but she chose to be the spouse of Dargo.

But thou art alone Mingala! the night is coming with its clouds; where is the bed of thy repose? Where but in the tomb of Dargo?

Why dost thou lift the stone, O bard! why dost thou shut the narrow house? Mingala's eyes are heavy, bard! she must sleep with Dargo.

Last night I heard the song of joy in Lartho's lofty hall. But silence dwells around my bed. Mingala rests with Dargo.

stately. His eye is on his friends; for we stood, in our arms, whilst Teutha's waters rolled between. Dunthalmo came with his spear, and pierced the hero's side: he rolled on the bank in his blood. We heard his broken sighs. Calthon rushed into the stream: I bounded forward on my spear. Teutha's race fell before us. Night came rolling down. Dunthalmo rested on a rock, amidst an aged wood. The rage of his bosom burned against the car-borne Calthon. But Calthon stood in his grief; he mourned the fallen Colmar; Colmar slain in youth, before his fame arose!

I bade the song of woe to rise, to sooth the mournful chief; but he stood beneath a tree, and often threw his spear on earth. The humid eye of Colmal rolled near in a secret tear: she foresaw the fall of Dunthalmo, or of Clutha's warlike chief. Now half the night had passed away. Silence and darkness were on the field. Sleep rested on the eyes of the heroes: Calthon's settling soul was still. His eyes were half-closed, but the murmur of Teutha had not yet failed in his ear. Pale, and shewing his wounds, the ghost of Colmar came: he bent his head over the hero, and raised his feeble voice!

"Sleeps the son of Rathmor in his night, and his brother low? Did we not rise in the chase together? Pursued we not the dark-brown hinds? Colmar was not forgot till he fell: till death had blasted his youth. I lie pale beneath the rock of Lona. O let Calthon rise! the morning comes with its beams; Dunthalmo will dishonour the fallen."

He passed away in his blast. The rising Calthon saw the steps of his departure. He rushed in the sound of his steel. Unhappy Colmal rose. She followed her hero through night, and dragged her spear behind. But when Calthon came to Lona's rock, he found his fallen brother. The rage of his bosom rose; he rushed among the foe. The groans of death ascend. They close around the chief. He is bound in the midst, and brought to gloomy Dunthalmo. The shout of joy arose; and the hills of night replied.

I started at the sound: and took my father's spear. Diaran rose at my side; and the youthful strength of Dargo. We missed the chief of Clutha, and our souls were sad. I dreaded the departure of my fame. The pride of my valour rose! "Sons of Morven!" I said, "it is not thus our fathers fought. They rested not on the field of strangers, when the foe was not fallen before them. Their strength was like the eagles of heaven; their renown is in the song. But our people fall by degrees. Our fame begins to depart. What shall the king of Morven say, if Ossian conquers not at Teutha? Rise in your steel, ye warriors! follow the sound of Ossian's course. He will not return, but renowned, to the echoing walls of Selma."

Morning rose on the blue waters of Teutha. Colmal stood before me in tears. She told of the chief of Clutha: thrice the spear fell from her hand My wrath turned against the stranger; for my soul trembled for Calthon. "Son of the feeble hand!" I said, "do Teutha's warriors fight with tears? The

battle is not won with grief; nor dwells the sigh in the soul of war. Go to the deer of Carmun, to the lowing herds of Teutha. But leave these arms, thou son of fear! A warrior may lift them in fight."

I tore the mail from her shoulders. Her snowy breast appeared. She bent her blushing face to the ground. I looked in silence to the chiefs. The spear fell from my hand; the sigh of my bosom rose! But when I heard the name of the maid, my crowding tears rushed down. I blessed the lovely beam of youth, and bade the battle move!

Why, son of the rock, should Ossian tell how Teutha's warriors died? They are now forgot in their land; their tombs are not found on the heath. Years came on with their storms. The green mounds are mouldered away. Scarce is the grave of Dunthalmo seen, or the place where he fell by the spear of Ossian. Some grey warrior, half blind with age, sitting by night at the flaming oak of the hall, tells now my deeds to his sons, and the fall of the dark Dunthalmo. The faces of youth bend sidelong towards his voice. Surprize and joy burn in their eyes! I found Calthon bound to an oak; my sword cut the thongs from his hands. I gave him the white-bosomed Colmal. They dwelt in the halls of Teutha.

THE

WAR OF CAROS:

A

Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Caros is probably the noted usurper Carausius, by birth a Menapian, who assumed the purple in the year 284: and, seizing on Britain, defeated the Emperor Maximian Herculius in several naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem *the king of Ships*. He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obstruct the incursions of the Caledonians; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oscar, the son of Ossian. This battle is the foundation of the present poem, which is addressed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar.

THE

WAR OF CAROS:

A

Poem.

BRING, daughter of Toscar! bring the harp! the light of the song rises in Ossian's soul! It is like the field, when darkness covers the hills around, and the shadow grows slowly on the plain of the sun. I behold my son, O Malvina! near the mossy rock of Crona.* But it is the mist of the desert, tinged with the beam of the west! Lovely is the mist, that assumes the form of Oscar! turn from it, ye winds, when ye roar on the side of Ardven!

Who comes towards my son, with the murmur of a song? His staff is in his hand, his grey hair loose on the wind. Surly joy lightens his face. He often looks back to Caros. It is Ryno† of songs, he that went to view the foe. "What does Caros king of

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* Crona is the name of a small stream which runs into the Carron.

† Ryno is often mentioned in the ancient poetry. He seems to have been a bard of the first rank, in the days of Fingal.

ships?" said the son of the now mournful Ossian, "spreads he the wings* of his pride, bard of the times of old!" "He spreads them, Oscar," replied the bard, "but it is behind his gathered heap.† He looks over his stones with fear. He beholds thee terrible, as the ghost of night, that rolls the wave to his ships!"

"Go, thou first of my bards!" says Oscar, "take the spear of Fingal. Fix a flame on its point. Shake it to the winds of heaven. Bid him, in songs, to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave. Tell to Caros that I long for battle; that my bow is weary of the chase of Cona. Tell him the mighty are not here; and that my arm is young."

He went with the murmur of songs. Oscar reared his voice on high. It reached his heroes on Ardven, like the noise of a cave, when the sea of Togorma rolls before it, and its trees meet the roaring winds. They gather round my son like the streams of the hill; when, after rain, they roll in the pride of their course. Ryno came to the mighty Caros. He struck his flaming spear. Come to the battle of Oscar, O thou that sittest on the rolling of waves! Fingal is distant far; he hears the songs of bards in Morven: the wind of his hall is in his hair. His terrible spear is at his side; his shield that is like the darkened moon! Come to the battle of Oscar; the hero is alone!

He came not over the streamy Carun.‡ The bard

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* The Roman eagle.

† Agricola's wall, which Carausius repaired.

‡ The river Carron.

returned with his song. Grey night grows dim on Crona. The feast of shells is spread. A hundred oaks burn to the wind; faint light gleams over the heath. The ghosts of Ardven pass through the beam, and shew their dim and distant forms. Comala* is half unseen on her meteor; Hidallan is sullen and dim, like the darkened moon behind the mist of night.

"Why art thou sad?" said Ryno; for he alone beheld the chief. "Why art thou sad, Hidallan! hast thou not received thy fame? The songs of Ossian have been heard: thy ghost has brightened in wind, when thou didst bend from thy cloud, to hear the song of Morven's bard!" "And do thine eyes," said Oscar, "behold the chief, like the dim meteor of night? Say, Ryno, say, how fell Hidallan, the renowned in the days of my fathers? His name remains on the rocks of Cona. I have often seen the streams of his hills!"

Fingal, replied the bard, drove Hidallan from his wars. The king's soul was sad for Comala, and his eyes could not behold the chief. Lonely, sad along the heath, he slowly moved, with silent steps. His arms hang disordered on his side. His hair loose from his brow. The tear is in his downcast eyes; a sigh half-silent in his breast! Three days he strayed unseen, alone, before he came to

* This is the scene of Comala's death, which is the subject of the dramatic poem. The poet mentions her in this place, in order to introduce the sequel of Hidallan's story, who, on account of her death, had been expelled from the wars of Fingal.

Lamor's halls: the mossy halls of his fathers, at the stream of Balva.* There Lamor sat alone beneath a tree; for he had sent his people with Hidallan to war. The stream ran at his feet, his grey head rested on his staff. Sightless are his aged eyes. He hums the song of other times. The noise of Hidallan's feet came to his ear: he knew the tread of his son.

"Is the son of Lamor returned; or is it the sound of his ghost? Hast thou fallen on the banks of Carun, son of the aged Lamor? Or, if I hear the sound of Hidallan's feet, where are the mighty in war? where are my people, Hidallan! that were wont to return with their echoing shields? Have they fallen on the banks of Carun?"

"No:" replied the sighing youth, "the people of Lamor live. They are renowned in war, my father! but Hidallan is renowned no more. I must sit alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of the battle grows."

"But thy fathers never sat alone," replied the rising pride of Lamor. "They never sat alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of battle rose. Dost thou not behold that tomb? My eyes discern it not; there rests the noble Garmállon, who never fled from war! Come, thou renowned in battle, he says, come to thy father's tomb. How am I renowned, Garmállon? my son has fled from war!"

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* This is perhaps that small stream, still retaining the name of Balva, which runs through the romantic valley of Glentivar in Stirlingshire. Balva signifies *a silent stream*; and Glentivar *the sequestered vale.*

"King of the streamy Balva!" said Hidallan with a sigh, "why dost thou torment my soul? Lamor, I never fled. Fingal was sad for Comala; he denied his wars to Hidallan. Go to the grey streams of thy land, he said; moulder like a leafless oak, which the winds have bent over Balva, never more to grow!"

"And must I hear," Lamor replied, "the lonely tread of Hidallan's feet? When thousands are renowned in battle, shall he bend over my grey streams? Spirit of the noble Garmállon! carry Lamor to his place; his eyes are dark; his soul is sad; his son has lost his fame!"

"Where," said the youth, "shall I search for fame to gladden the soul of Lamor? From whence shall I return with renown, that the sound of my arms may be pleasant in his ear? If I go to the chase of hinds, my name will not be heard. Lamor will not feel my dogs, with his hands, glad at my arrival from the hill. He will not inquire of his mountains, or of the dark-brown deer of his deserts!"

"I must fall," said Lamor, "like a leafless oak: it grew on a rock! it was overturned by the winds! My ghost will be seen on my hills, mournful for my young Hidallan. Will not ye, ye mists! as ye rise, hide him from my sight? My son! go to Lamor's hall; there the arms of our fathers hang. Bring the sword of Garmállon; he took it from a foe!"

He went and brought the sword with all its studded thongs. He gave it to his father. The grey-haired hero felt the point with his hand.

"My son! lead me to Garmállon's tomb: it rises beside that rustling tree. The long grass is withered; I hear the breezes whistling there. A little fountain murmurs near, and sends its water to Balva. There let me rest; it is noon: the sun is on our fields!"

He led him to Garmállon's tomb. Lamor pierced the side of his son. They sleep together: their ancient halls moulder away. Ghosts are seen there at noon: the valley is silent, and the people shun the place of Lamor.

"Mournful is thy tale," said Oscar, "son of the times of old! My soul sighs for Hidallan; he fell in the days of his youth. He flies on the blast of the desert, his wandering is in a foreign land. Sons of the echoing Morven! draw near to the foes of Fingal. Send the night away in songs; watch the strength of Caros. Oscar goes to the people of other times; to the shades of silent Ardven; where his fathers sit dim in their clouds, and behold the future war. And art thou there, Hidallan, like a half-extinguished meteor? Come to my sight, in thy sorrow, chief of the winding Balva!"

The heroes move with their songs. Oscar slowly ascends the hill. The meteors of night set on the heath before him. A distant torrent faintly roars. Unfrequent blasts rush through aged oaks. The half enlightened moon sinks dim and red behind her hill. Feeble voices are heard on the heath. Oscar drew his sword!

"Come," said the hero, "O ye ghosts of my fathers! ye that fought against the kings of the

world! Tell me the deeds of future times; and your converse in your caves; when you talk together, and behold your sons in the fields of the brave."

Trenmor came, from his hill, at the voice of his mighty son. A cloud, like the steed of the stranger, supported his airy limbs. His robe is of the mist of Lano, that brings death to the people. His sword is a green meteor half-extinguished. His face is without form, and dark. He sighed thrice over the hero: thrice the winds of night roared around! Many were his words to Oscar; but they only came by halves to our ears: they were dark as the tales of other times, before the light of the song arose. He slowly vanished, like a mist that melts on the sunny hill. It was then, O daughter of Toscar! my son began first to be sad. He foresaw the fall of his race. At times, he was thoughtful and dark; like the sun when he carries a cloud on his face, but again he looks forth from his darkness on the green hills of Cona.

Oscar passed the night among his fathers, grey morning met him on Carun's banks. A green vale surrounded a tomb which arose in the times of old. Little hills lift their head at a distance; and stretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros sat there, for they had passed the stream by night. They appeared, like the trunks of aged pines, to the pale light of the morning. Oscar stood at the tomb, and raised thrice his terrible voice. The rocking hills echoed around; the starting roes bounded away: And the trembling ghosts of the

dead fled, shrieking on their clouds. So terrible was the voice of my son, when he called his friends!

A thousand spears arose around; the people of Caros rose. Why, daughter of Toscar, why that tear? My son, though alone, is brave. Oscar is like a beam of the sky; he turns around, and the people fall. His hand is the arm of a ghost, when he stretches it from a cloud; the rest of his thin form is unseen; but the people die in the vale! My son beheld the approach of the foe; he stood in the silent darkness of his strength. "Am I alone, said Oscar, in the midst of a thousand foes? Many a spear is there! many a darkly-rolling eye! Shall I fly to Ardven? But did my fathers ever fly? The mark of their arm is in a thousand battles. Oscar too shall be renowned! Come, ye dim ghosts of my fathers, and behold my deeds in war! I may fall; but I will be renowned like the race of the echoing Morven." He stood, growing in his place, like a flood in a narrow vale! The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the sword of Oscar!

The noise reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred streams. The warriors of Caros fled; Oscar remained like a rock left by the ebbing sea. Now dark and deep, with all his steeds, Caros rolled his might along: the little streams are lost in his course; the earth is rocking round. Battle spreads from wing to wing: ten thousand swords gleam at once in the sky. But why should Ossian sing of battles? For never more shall my steel shine in war. I remember the days of my

youth with grief; when I feel the weakness of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midst of their renown! They have not beheld the tombs of their friend; or failed to bend the bow of their strength. Happy art thou, O Oscar, in the midst of thy rushing blast. Thou often goest to the fields of thy fame, where Caros fled from thy lifted sword.

Darkness comes on my soul, O fair daughter of Toscar! I behold not the form of my son at Carun; nor the figure of Oscar on Crona. The rustling winds have carried him far away; and the heart of his father is sad. But lead me, O Malvina! to the sound of my woods; to the roar of my mountain streams. Let the chase be heard on Cona; let me think on the days of other years. And bring me the harp, O maid! that I may touch it, when the light of my soul shall arise. Be thou near, to learn the song; future times shall hear of me! The sons of the feeble hereafter will lift the voice on Cona; and, looking up to the rocks, say, "Here Ossian dwelt." They shall admire the chiefs of old, the race that are no more! while we ride on our clouds, Malvina! on the wings of the roaring winds. Our voices shall be heard, at times, in the desert; we shall sing on the breeze of the rock.*

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* How truly has this prophetical address to Malvina been realized in my own case. *C.*

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